GOP SUICIDE UPDATE

THE MAIDENS' TALE—*MARGARET TALBOT*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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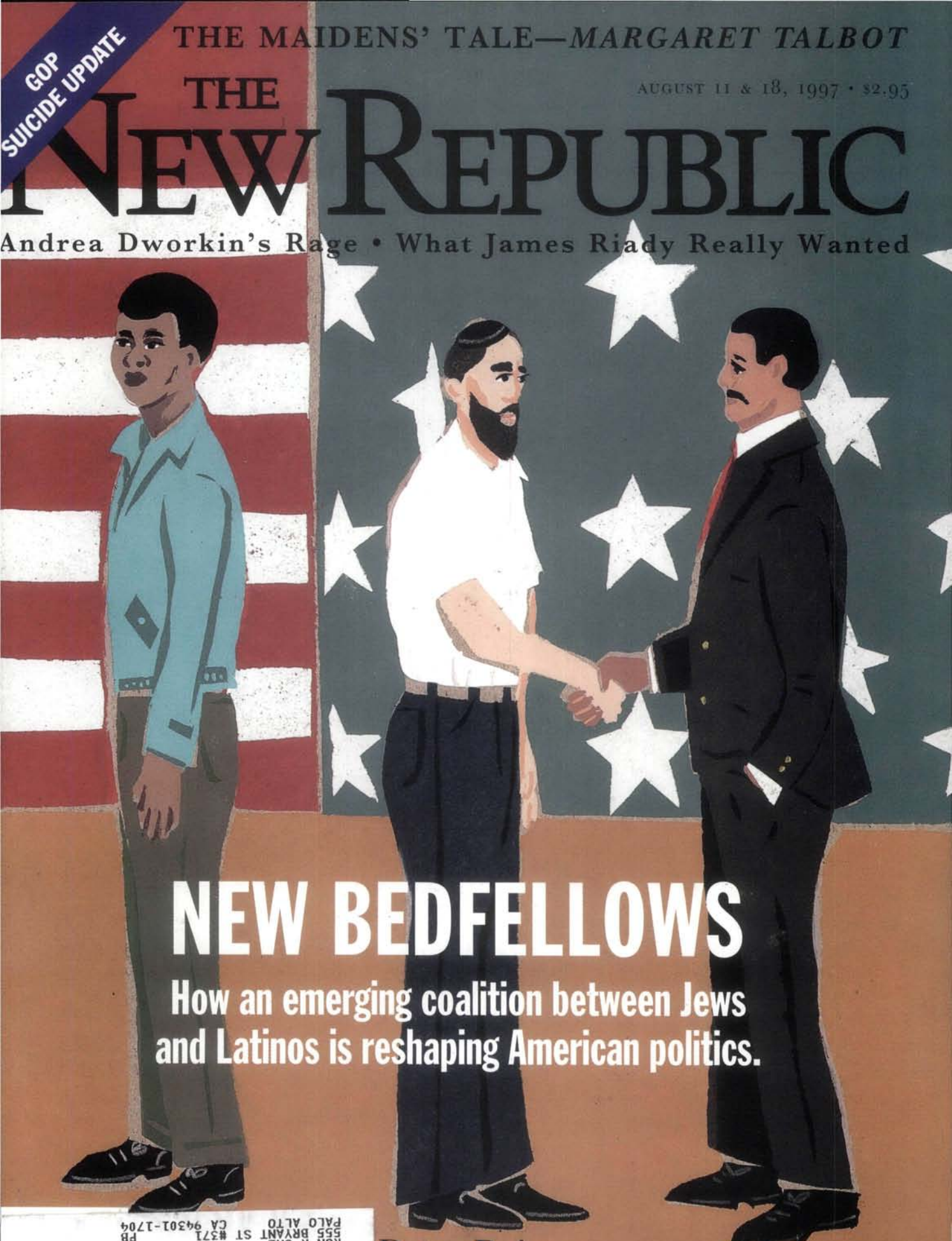

NEW BEDFELLOWS

How an emerging coalition between Jews and Latinos is reshaping American politics.

Peter Beinart

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

AUGUST 11 & 18, 1997

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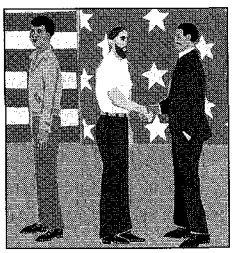

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CORRESPONDENCE

Urban decay

To the editors:

Peter Beinart is largely on the mark in "The Pride of the Cities" (June 30). However, in the case of New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, his analysis is flawed on two counts. First, Beinart writes that Mayor Giuliani has "resolutely disavowed the GOP's stance on . . . gay rights." The fact is, the mayor has never supported New York City's gay community. Giuliani eliminated the office of Lesbian and Gay Community Affairs and tried to remove the city's Division of AIDS Services (DAS). When that failed, he cut DAS's budget by 25 percent.

Second, Beinart credits Giuliani with being single-handedly responsible for New York City's amazing recent drop in crime. Although Beinart writes that former Mayor David Dinkins "hired 7,000 new police in his final years in office," he does not acknowledge this as even minimally responsible for the decline in crime rates. It was Dinkins's "Safe Streets, Safe City" act which provided for the hiring of 7,000 new police officers, a rise of more than 25 percent. However, as Beinart mentions, the act was signed into law toward the end of Dinkins's term: the effects of such a dramatic increase in the city's police force would be revealed shortly after Mayor Giuliani took office. Mayor Dinkins deserves more than minimal credit for the reduction in crime in New York City.

MICAH C. LASHER
New York, New York

To the editors:

Peter Beinart succinctly identified the political trend occurring in some of the largest cities across the country that we have witnessed in Chicago since Mayor Daley's election in 1989. But I wish to point out a small error. Beinart says, "Speaking of Richard J. Daley's radical attack on Chicago's bloated school bureaucracy over the past two years. . . ." Richard J. Daley, who passed away in 1976, was current Mayor Richard M. Daley's father.

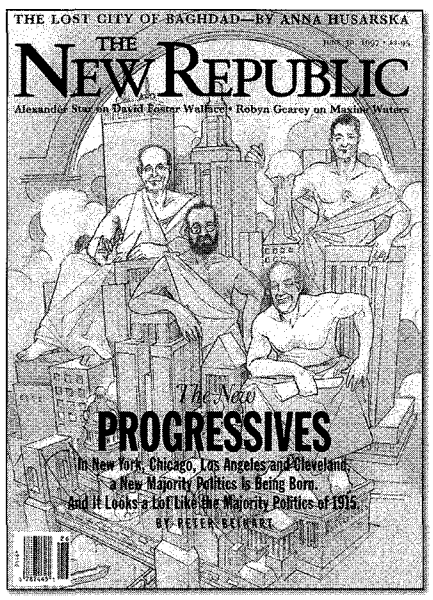
DAVID PRINDABLE
Chicago, Illinois

Party feud

To the editors:

Okay. Okay. I'll play. When Tucker Carlson wrote "What I Sold at the Revolution" (June 9), his friends and coworkers told me that his goal was to write critically of a conservative so that he could escape the conservative writers' ghetto and make himself desirable to *Esquire* and *Vanity Fair*. I ignored him rather than give him the attention he craved. But then Jacob Weisberg wrote in *Slate* that the present democratic government of the Seychelles was a "Marxist government," and in acknowledging this error cited Tucker Carlson's article as his source. In the new world of Nexis journalism, it is important to set the record straight.

There are seventeen errors in Carlson's article that an honest journalist or a fact checker would have caught. The article drips with venom about my "shabby rented house" and "inexpensive" and "unstylish" clothes. Why the deliberate errors and the nastiness?


THE LOST CITY OF BAGHDAD—BY ANNA HUSARSKA
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Alexander Stuart on David Foster Wallace • Robyn Gearey on Maxine Waters
The New
PROGRESSIVES
In New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Cleveland, a New Majority Politics Is Being Born. And It Looks a Lot Like the Majority Politics of 1915.
BY PETER BEINART

I had never met nor heard of Tucker Carlson before this article. But I did have run-ins with his father, Dick Carlson, a conflict of interest Tucker deliberately withheld from his readers. While I was working to restore democracy to the Seychelles, Dick Carlson was announced as the new ambassador to the Seychelles. I was told he was a "Reaganite," "one of us," and so I met with him early one morning at a townhouse in Georgetown to ask his help in moving material and propaganda into the Seychelles so we could communicate better with supporters on the island. In the end, Carlson would not help us. We tried to get his support. I wrote letters praising him for support that never materialized. We tried to shame him into helping. I won't forgive him. When our team holds the cold war version of the Nuremberg trials, I will testify against Carlson as a collaborator.

And when Carlson returned to the United States, he joined the board of PBS; during his tenure he was accused of scheming to use tax dollars to hire lobbyists to push for more taxpayer dollars to PBS. It is illegal to use taxpayer dollars to lobby Congress. *The Washington Times* reported this alleged scheme on its front page. I gave him an "Enemy of the Taxpayer Award" for his perfidy. Some Reaganite. His son has not forgiven me.

"When Tucker Carlson failed to disclose his father's role as ambassador to the Seychelles," the dean of the Washington press corps, Bob Novak, said, "he undermined his credibility." I have asked the owners, editors and writers of almost every other opinion journal if they would have allowed such a conflict and all said "never."

While everything interesting or original in the article is untrue, the most important lie to expose is Tucker Carlson's claim that the Seychelles is not a democracy and not worthy of my attention and support.

The reason for Tucker's anti-Seychelles animus is that his father was sent to the Seychelles as ambassador not as a promotion, but as punishment for fighting with George Bush's friend Bruce Gelb at the U.S. Information Agency. He saw the Seychelles as a place of exile, a reminder of his public humiliation and truncated career. But let's look at the facts.

The U.S. State Department's Human Rights Country Report on the Seychelles found the 1993 elections to be "free and fair presidential elections and parliamentary elections." The entire report can be found on the Web at: http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1996_hrp_report/Seychell.html. The Seychelles's parliament is televised. The hotels and the tuna packing plant have been privatized. More of the Seychellois economy has been privatized in the past four years than any other nation. Those wondering about the strategic value of a nation through whose territorial waters pass most of the shipping from the Gulf oil states might check on the size of the growing Chinese Embassy or simply look at a map of the Indian Ocean. The United States has no embassy in the Seychelles. The United States needs a larger, not smaller, military and diplomatic presence in the Indian Ocean. I am proud that both political parties in the Seychelles asked me to work to strengthen the American presence in the region.

GROVER NORQUIST
Washington, D.C.

Tucker Carlson replies:

It's hard to know which to point out first, Grover Norquist's dishonesty or his authoritarian impulses. I tried to estab-

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lish both in my piece about him, but Norquist does a far better job making my point in his own letter. As far as I know, my father never had conflicts of any kind with Norquist, either in Washington or the Seychelles, never received (or at least never noticed he had received) an "Enemy of the Taxpayer Award" (whatever that is), was not involved in any scheme to use taxpayers' money to lobby Congress and never served on the board of PBS (he was appointed by President Bush as chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which is not the same thing). The implication that, while working for Presidents Reagan and Bush, my father was soft on communism would be offensive if it weren't so absurd. Norquist's rant about collaborators and Nuremberg trials speaks for itself. As for errors in my piece, Norquist claims to have found seventeen, but doesn't cite a single one of them. Nor does he address the substance of my story in any way. Instead, he invents a scenario worthy of Sophocles to dismiss what he cannot defend. Apparently, Norquist is in worse shape than I thought. One of his claims, however, is amusing enough to refute. Norquist says that, before this spring, he had never met nor heard of me. Perhaps he has forgotten that I brought a tape recorder to the numerous interviews I've conducted with him over the past six years, including one in his office this February.

Low rent

To the editors:

Jonathan Chait ("HUD Sucker Proxy," June 23) writes that Congress and the Clinton administration agree on legislation that will result in pushing poor people out of projects. Not so. The fate of the poorest of America's poor is the exact issue that distinguishes the president's bill from the one passed by the House in May. And that difference is the reason I urged President Clinton to veto it. Congress and the administration agree that the most dilapidated high-rise properties should be torn down and replaced with less-dense townhouse communities on site and with vouchers that displaced residents can use to live anywhere they choose. They also agree that, in areas where the housing stock is worth saving, a greater mix of income among residents is needed to break up the "atmosphere of festering, self-reinforcing poverty" that Chait describes.

The consensus breaks down on formulas to achieve the proper income mix and protect poor families. The administration's plan would allow half of all public housing families to earn as much as $26,100 a year, but would reserve 40 percent of units for the poorest of the poor. The House bill, by contrast, would open up about two-thirds of public housing units to better-off families making nearly $35,000 a year—even more in certain high-wage communities. Income limits are adjusted locally; the figures cited here are national averages.

I ask backers of the House bill: Where will the poorest Americans live if they are denied access to public housing? Chait believes greater use of portable housing vouchers would help break up concentrations of poverty that exist in many urban public housing developments. We agree. In HUD's proposed 1998 budget, the administration asked for 50,000 new vouchers. In 1996 and 1997, Congress rejected similar administration requests and approved no new vouchers.

The administration pushed for and got enacted a law that requires local housing authorities to replace public housing units with vouchers if the switch would save money. Housing authorities are making those cost comparisons right now.

In HUD's reform bill, all new portable vouchers that Congress approves would be reserved for families earning less than $22,000; three-quarters of those vouchers would be held for families making below $13,000. Since vouchers are portable and recipients scatter through-

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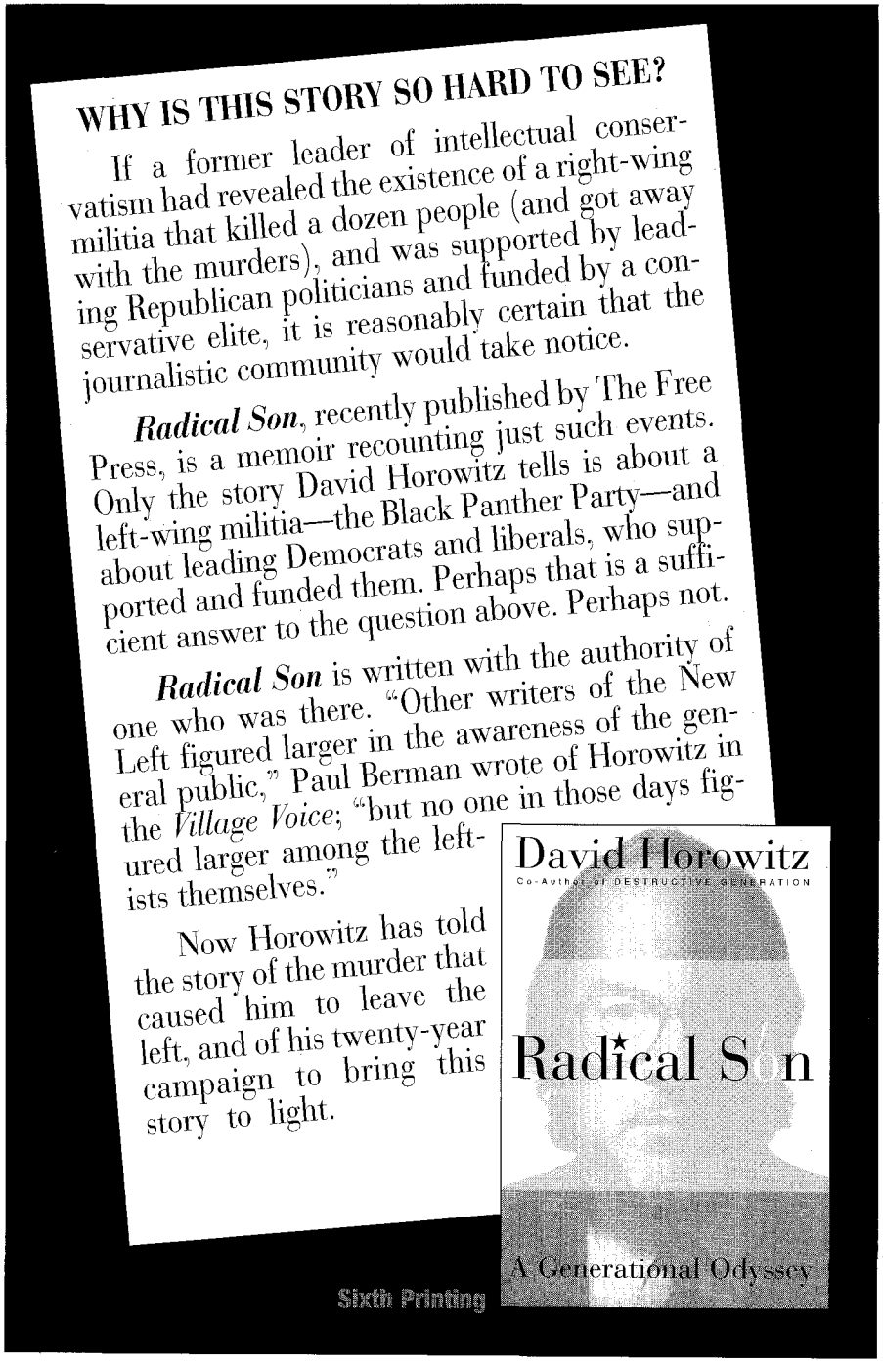
WHY IS THIS STORY SO HARD TO SEE?
If a former leader of intellectual conservatism had revealed the existence of a right-wing militia that killed a dozen people (and got away with the murders), and was supported by leading Republican politicians and funded by a conservative elite, it is reasonably certain that the journalistic community would take notice.
Radical Son, recently published by The Free Press, is a memoir recounting just such events. Only the story David Horowitz tells is about a left-wing militia—the Black Panther Party—and about leading Democrats and liberals, who supported and funded them. Perhaps that is a sufficient answer to the question above. Perhaps not.
Radical Son is written with the authority of one who was there. "Other writers of the New Left figured larger in the awareness of the general public," Paul Berman wrote of Horowitz in the Village Voice; "but no one in those days figured larger among the leftists themselves."
Now Horowitz has told the story of the murder that caused him to leave the left, and of his twenty-year campaign to bring this story to light.
David Horowitz
Co-Author of DESTRUCTIVE GENERATION
Radical Son
A Generational Odyssey
Sixth Printing

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FROM WASHINGTON

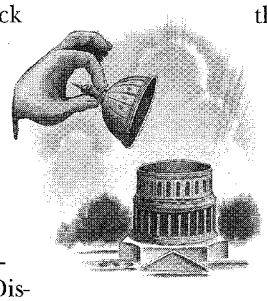
Geronimo!

As a reluctant member of the appalling baby-boomer generation, I have always comforted myself with the promise of mortality. In time my fellow boomers and I would lie mouldering, and the world would be a better place. I know now I was a Pollyanna. Recently I spent a weekend in Vermont. Vermont's prospects could hardly please more; the place is stuffed with verdant vistas, mountain views, bosky dells, bubbling brooks and limpid lakes. But then there is man, and he is vile. You cannot swat a black fly in Vermont without disturbing the vacant-eyed rest of a pallid, hairy and purposefully ugly white person. Hippies are everywhere, in every variety and of every age: ancient bedspring-scarred veterans of the summer of love, dreadlocked ingénues still plowing through the mire of their first Chomsky, preschoolers with names like Cypress and Che.

What has happened to Vermont has to a less obvious degree happened all over the country, and it is the reason I was deluded in my fatalistic optimism. When the subject of the left is raised these days, the general liberal response is to assert that the left scarcely exists, consisting only of a fringe element, isolated and ignored, in a few editorial boards and humanities departments. This is wrong. The left is not nowhere, it is, in a bland and vague way, everywhere. As the aging sandalistas have accrued power and raised children, their values have become the values of the age. The result is a corollary to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's theory of defining deviancy down. Call it defining radicalism in. What was once radical is now normal. What was once left is now establishmentarian center.

This would not matter if the only outcome was the cultural takeover of New England. But consider a front-page story in the Sunday, July 20, edition of *The New York Times*, the mainstreamer of record. The story, by Don Terry, concerned the recent overturning of the conviction of Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt, a former member of the Black Panthers, after twenty-seven years' imprisonment on charges of murder. It was a piece of work.

Pratt, who was convicted of the 1968 robbery-related murder of a Santa Monica teacher named Caroline Olsen, was presented to *Times* readers as "a Vietnam War hero" and a man "admired for his charisma and warrior spirit," who was, in his uncontradicted opinion, "framed for the murder by the authorities ... because he dared to stand up for his people as the leader of the Black Panther Party in Southern California." Pratt's lawyer, who is of course Johnnie L. Cochran, is presented as a self-admitted naïf for even thinking that Pratt would get a fair trial. The Black Panthers are presented as a romantic band who "mixed black nationalism and socialism, shotguns and free breakfast programs for children, medical clinics, free schools, law books and revolutionary rhetoric about power coming from the barrel of a gun." Los Angeles District Attorney Gil Garcetti, who is appealing the decision freeing Pratt, is presented as animated by an ambition that is, in the words of one of three anti-Garcetti "experts" quoted, "more political than it is of a legal base."



It is possible that Pratt was innocent of murder. And it is true that the FBI did have an interest in (as an FBI memo in 1970 noted) "neutralizing Pratt as an effective B.P.P. functionary." And the decision by Judge Everett W. Dickey to overturn Pratt's conviction—because the prosecution had failed to inform the jury that a key witness against Pratt was also a government informant—was not unreasonable. And yet there is a great deal more to the Pratt case than this.

Terry mentions a few pieces of the circumstantial evidence against Pratt: he was identified as the killer by the murdered woman's husband, who was also shot in the robbery; and "the getaway car used in the killing had belonged to Mr. Pratt." But he mentions these inconvenient facts only to dismiss them, and he does not mention others: that Pratt's alibi (he claimed he was in a Panther meeting in Oakland at the time) was not supported by fellow Panthers; that a handgun identified by expert prosecution testimony as the murder weapon had, according to a witness, belonged to Pratt; that a witness identified Pratt as one of two men who tried to rob a store shortly before the nearby murder of Caroline Olsen by two men. Nowhere in the paper's lengthy account is any voice given to the prosecution's version of events. Not a single person who believes in Pratt's guilt is quoted.

Neither does the *Times* mention anywhere that the Black Panthers, during the years of Pratt's high-level involvement, constituted an ongoing criminal enterprise, with both leadership and rank-and-file members actively engaged in crime on a large scale, including extortion and murder, as has been documented by Hugh Pearson in his book *The Shadow of the Panther*. The true nature of the California Panthers was revealed by former Panther leader Elaine Brown in 1993, in her memoir *A Taste of Power*. Brown, the lover of Panther founder Huey Newton, writes of presiding over a stomping session inflicted on an errant Panther by four security force thugs: "the floor was rumbling, as though a platoon of pneumatic drills were breaking through its foundation. Blood was everywhere. [His] face disappeared." This aspect of the little group that mixed black nationalism with free breakfasts was not fit for the *Times*. Nor, apparently, was the murder of Oakland prostitute Kathleen Smith, over which Newton fled the country. Nor was the murder of Panther bookkeeper Betty Van Patter, whose death after questioning accounting irregularities in the books of a Panther enterprise was reported by Kate Coleman two years ago in *Heterodoxy*.

Back when the New Left was new, not long before Elmer Pratt was indicted for the murder of Caroline Olsen, *The New York Times* ran two stories reporting, as an uncontroverted fact, that the police had to date killed twenty-eight members of the Black Panther Party. Reporter John Kifner, echoing Panther claims, suggested that anti-Panther rhetoric by the Nixon administration had encouraged "a climate of opinion among local police ... that a virtual open season has been declared on the Panthers." Edward J. Epstein investigated the matter for *The New Yorker*. Epstein examined every one of the twenty-eight deaths. He reported, in February 1971, that only ten of the Panthers had been killed by police (most of the rest had met their violent ends as a result of various forms of internecine warfare), and, as he wrote, "six of the ten Panthers were killed by seriously wounded policemen who clearly had reason to believe that their own lives were in jeopardy." Nearly three decades later, the myth of the Panthers has not been exposed by the *Times*. It has been institutionalized. Pass the Cherry Garcia.

MICHAEL KELLY

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 11 & 18, 1997

SECURITY COUNSEL

Sure, Jesse Helms is a fanatic and a 1930s-style isolationist. But dealing with the United Nations can do that to you. When TNR phoned the U.N. to have a copy of Kofi Annan's recent reform proposal mailed overnight, a press officer told us it was out of the question. He was way too busy to go down to his building's ground floor, where Federal Express agents pick up packages, and the agents aren't allowed up to the ninth floor, where he works, for security reasons. He added, for good measure, that we would have to initiate all future communication since U.N. regulations prohibit him from phoning outside of the 212 area code.

The reforms, once we got hold of them, turned out to be frustrating, too. Numerous agencies cry out for the ax—for instance, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development, which both specialize in peddling 1970s-style, statist development strategies to the Third World. But Annan doesn't propose eliminating a single one. Helms responded to Annan's plan with snarls of disapproval, and his henchman on U.N. issues, Rod Grams of Minnesota, suggested that an unimpressed Senate will continue to withhold the money America owes in back dues.

Emotionally, we're with them (though Helms might have a little more credibility on the efficiency issue if he hadn't helped sink proposals that UNICEF—and its congressionally connected chief Carol Bellamy—be merged with other agencies that do much the same work). But, strategically, we disagree. Any real attack on U.N. bloat and fraud requires the approval of the General Assembly, which is dominated by Third World states that treasure the U.N.'s white elephant agencies because they provide jobs for their bureaucrats. And it's not the right time to plunge into a battle with the Third World over management reform because the United States should be preparing to plunge into a battle over the only thing at the U.N. that really matters: the Security Council.

If the Security Council is to act effectively in the coming decades, as it did during the Gulf war, it needs to take in countries powerful enough to help the United States respond to potential crises and enlightened enough to want to do so. Those countries, of course, are Japan and Germany, and getting them into the Security Council is critical not simply to insure the council's continued relevance, but as part of an immensely important effort to convince Tokyo and Berlin to take more responsibility for maintaining the liberal international order from which they have benefited so greatly.

Thus, the U.N. reform proposal that really mattered last week was Ambassador Bill Richardson's announcement on the Security Council. Richardson proposed adding to the council three permanent Third World representatives (there are already rotating Third World representatives). This seemed, on its face, silly and cynical. But what the proposal really meant was that, after five years of fruitless discussion and a growing sense that Security Council reform was dead, the United States is making a serious move to bring in Japan and Germany. Because changing the Security Council also requires General Assembly approval, Japan and Germany can't enter unless the Third World gets to pack the council with a few permanent members of its own. And so we have the Richardson proposal: a compromise distasteful for its hypocrisy, but in the service of a greater good.

As long as Richardson stays steadfast in his refusal to allow the Third Worlders a veto, this is a deal worth pursuing—and the United States would be wiser to link its payment of back dues to the fate of the Security Council than to the elimination of some annoying but powerless agencies. Unfortunately, Richardson's announcement was promptly attacked by Senator Helms—who doesn't want a Security Council that can manage the international order—and by administration officials who responded to Helms's ranting by undercutting their own U.N. ambassador.

Both the ranting and the undercutting are misplaced. Unless the United States fights to get Japan and Germany on the Security Council, it will not happen. China, which wants a council unable to confront international aggressors, would like to empower the human rights-averse developing countries (how human rights-averse was shown again last week when the General Assembly bashed Israel over its construction at Har Homa) on the council while denying Japan a seat. To win the coming diplomatic slugfest, the Clinton administration will need some Third World backing. Simultaneously taking on the developing countries over management reform would likely doom the effort. Let's leave the battle on U.N. waste and incompetence for another day, and focus on building a Security Council that can help manage the peace into the next century. Meanwhile, hand over management of the U.N. press office to Federal Express. •

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NOTEBOOK

GLAAD TO HELP: As the manhunt for accused serial killer Andrew Cunanan intensifies, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation has distributed a sensitivity primer for reporters. The number-one no-no: "DO NOT identify someone as a 'gay killer.'... One would be outraged to see [Cunanan] termed as a 'Filipino killer'." There are other pitfalls: "DO NOT refer to gay bars, clubs and nightlife as a 'gay underworld' or 'gay underground.' Many bars and clubs are decades-old institutions that have been important in the development of lesbian and gay communities." Also needlessly hurtful is the use of "inappropriate or stereotypical imagery, such as footage of gay men 'cruising' at parks." Instead, GLAAD suggests, "Explore the life of a well-respected figure such as Gianni Versace. The positive contributions made by the victim are often lost in the telling." So is the truth.

A TAX BY ANY OTHER NAME: Every budget season features an obscure debate over what constitutes a "tax increase." This year's interlocution has reached a nadir on the subject of Medicare. Although both parties agree on the need to raise premiums for higher-income recipients, Republicans insist that the Department of Health and Human Services collect them rather than the IRS—even though the Congressional Budget Office (run by a GOP-appointed economist) estimates that this would lead to massive overbilling and billions in lost revenue. Republicans' logic: if the government has you give your entitlement back to the IRS, it's a tax increase. But if the money goes to HHS, it's a spending cut. No, wait, make that a reduction in the rate of growth.

TAINTED TESTIMONIAL I: Sometimes "infocolumns" on *The New York Times* op-ed page make corporate Freudian slips that reveal the sponsor's agenda. Consider Mobil's thoughtful July 17 "op-ed" on the proper application of economic sanctions: "Mobil is urging stepped-up dialogue around the world—especially in countries such as Nigeria, where we feel U.S. unilateral sanctions will only isolate it from moderating influences." Of course one of those influences is Mobil, which, along with Shell and Chevron, provides Nigeria with almost 90 percent of its export earnings. Two days before the ad appeared, Mobil leased three new oil platforms near Nigeria. Stepping up the dialogue indeed.

TAINTED TESTIMONIAL II: When readers of *The Los Angeles Times* came across David J. Rothkopf's July 21 op-ed defending China, many thought they were reading the unbiased opinion of a lofty academic. After all, the *Times* identified Rothkopf as "an international affairs consultant in New York and an adjunct professor of international affairs at Columbia University and at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service" and "deputy undersecretary for trade in the Commerce Department in the first Clinton administration." Alas, the credit line was a bit modest. The "consultant" work refers to his position as managing director of Kissinger Associates, which has clients with extensive financial interests in China and long-standing links to the Chinese regime. Rothkopf is entitled to his opinions, but *Times* readers are entitled to know if those opinions might represent something other than the uncomplicated warblings of a cloistered academic.

KNOW-NOTHING NOMINEE: The territory covered by the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs stretches from Iran to Morocco, from Turkey to Yemen. The assistant secretary in charge of this bureau must handle the volatile mix of religion and politics in the region; the prevalence of unbridled authoritarianism; the economic rot which has set in since the oil boom; the protection of the petroleum supply for the U.S. and its allies; the normalization of terrorism as politics by other means—and, of course, what's left of the Arab-Israeli conflict. About those latter challenges the man whom President Clinton has nominated for this position knows something, but about the other, more salient, ones Martin Indyk knows little or nothing. He skyrocketed through the diplomatic establishment: he was not yet an American citizen when he was already being mentioned as the senior director for Near East and South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council; and, less than two years later, he was in Tel Aviv as our ambassador. There he distinguished himself by exhorting the president to campaign for Shimon Peres, thereby helping to ensure Benjamin Netanyahu's election. He has also ridiculed the legislatively mandated congressional intention that Jerusalem at last be recognized as Israel's capital. Indyk is another professional peace processor who thinks that the Israeli-Palestinian situation is the alpha and omega of foreign policy. In fact, while some regimes divert popular discontent with what Fouad Ajami calls a "let them eat anti-Zionism" policy, most of them care not a fig about either Israel or the Palestinians. Indyk knows no Arabic and has never been posted in an Arab or Muslim capital—he has written not a significant word on his subjects. He is just a bureaucrat oiling his way to a position that demands judgment seasoned by learning. How, precisely, will he brief U.S. leaders on the government death squads at war with Islamic terrorists in Algeria, or the rehabilitation of Saddam Hussein among even the Arabs he set out to conquer? (Who will brief the briefer?) A nominee who knows Israel poorly and clumsily, and the region almost not at all: this is one appointment that the Foreign Relations Committee should ponder hard.

CORRECTION: Last week's lead editorial incorrectly reported the amount of U.S. assistance to Cambodia. The correct figures are $35 million per year in economic and development aid, and $7 million in military aid. •

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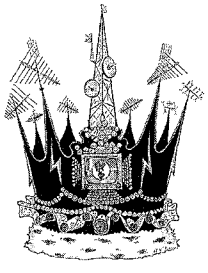
MEDIA REX

OH MY!

By William Powers

When the president's advisory panel on race met for the first time last week, it tried to do what all presidential boards and commissions are supposed to do, which is induce a deep, forgetful sleep. Blue-ribbon bodies have always worked this way. Each begins with some Really Bad Thing (crime, poverty, disease, Oliver North) that, it is generally agreed, we want to be rid of. The president, in lieu of action, appoints a board of deeply accomplished types—reverends, doctors, honorables—to make the problem go away. After many months, the worthies issue their report, a thick document so packed with abstraction, difference-splitting and pretzeled syntax that they must include a one-page *Cliffs Notes* for the media, called the "executive summary." Reporters read this page and rush to press with the commission's "policy recommendations." And, in a perverse way, the problem has been solved: the Really Bad Thing has been rendered so boring that nobody cares anymore.



In short, commissions are a kind of national narcotic, a prescription that has worked brilliantly for some of the most high-achieving presidents. Clinton knows this, as he made clear with his description of what his race commission would accomplish: "I want this panel to help educate Americans about the facts surrounding issues of race, to promote a dialogue in every community in the land to confront and work through these issues, to recruit and encourage leadership at all levels to help breach racial divides and to find, develop and recommend how to implement concrete solutions to our problems, solutions that will involve all of us in government, business, communities and as individual citizens." But if Clinton thought racial narcosis was just a few boilerplate vacuities away, then he underestimated two key players: C-SPAN and commissioner Angela Oh.

Previous boards tended to keep internal passion and strife behind closed doors. Remember the discord inside the Scowcroft commission on strategic forces? Of course not: that's the point. But the race board's first session was aired by C-SPAN from the moment Erskine Bowles swore in the panelists. Any viewer could sit in on the proceedings, on the panelists' laps, as it were. And what quickly became clear was that the old blue-ribbon script—safe, sleepy—was being discarded before our eyes.

Which brings us to Angela Oh. A Los Angeles attorney of Korean-American descent, Oh proceeded to do the unthinkable: speak her mind. And what a curious mind it is. While the board was worrying about whether "the data will lead us towards a framework" and about developing a "set of priorities," Oh was declaring, "I don't need the data. I don't think any of us need the data." She wanted to talk about race and the judicial system. There should be "a stream of funding" for the race problem, she continued, "a trust fund and an agency," perhaps "a permanent entity" that will distribute money to communities where there are racial conflicts. *A permanent entity*? That phrase aroused *Washington Post* reporter Peter Baker, who approached Oh at the lunch break, seeking more details. She told him she imagined a federal department, something like the "ministries of unity" one finds in places like Indonesia. *Indonesia*! It was perhaps the most radical idea ever floated by a presidential commission, and we were barely an hour into things.

But Oh wasn't finished. It's time, she said, to "dump un-useful concepts like race"—to dump, in other words, the concept that the commission was created to address. Time also to jettison what she called "the black-white paradigm.... We need to go beyond that, because the world is about much more than that." This is when the alarm bells really started ringing: the sole Asian American on the board was arguing that the black-white dilemma is no longer at the heart of our race problem. To further heat things up, Oh pulled an audacious power move. Whenever she wasn't speaking, she spent her time tapping furiously away on a laptop. It was unclear whether she was taking down everything the other members said, just in case, or working on a screenplay.

The historian John Hope Franklin, the chairman of the commission, may be 82 years old, but he clearly knows a threat to his authority when he sees one. The black-white paradigm, he let it be known, was not going to be banished from *his* commission. "This country cut its eyeteeth on racism in the black-white sphere," he said. "They didn't do it with Native Americans. They did it on black-white relations.... And they learned how to do this to other people at other times, at later times, because they'd already become experts in this area." Franklin's "they" struck a sadly invidious note, and he was still hitting it a few days later. Just before Clinton addressed the NAACP convention on the subject of race, Franklin told the Associated Press that he regretted the president's speech had been before a black audience. "The white side has been in control of virtually everything, so they're the ones who need educating on what justice and equality mean," he said.

This is getting ugly, but this is what happens when you start suggesting that a presidential commission can find "concrete solutions" to race. As the Oh-Franklin exchange demonstrates, race is different from other problems. When Americans, even those of goodwill, talk about race, things become very tense very quickly. C-SPAN says it may cover future meetings of the panel, which unfortunately is emerging as a show to watch. This is one commission that promises to keep everyone awake, though we may wind up wishing we'd slept through it. •

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ON THE HILL

DÉJÀ COUP

By Stephen Glass

Standing on the southeast grounds of the Capitol last week, Democratic Representatives Louise Slaughter and Frank Pallone warned reporters that they had some bad news to deliver. Republicans, they said in tones more of sorrow than anger, are laying the groundwork to shut down the federal government for the second time in as many years. Federal workers may once again have to go without pay, they continued—agencies would be boarded up, crucial services would be severed.

But after the press conference something strange—indeed, almost Clintonian—happened. With their backs to the cameras, the sad-eyed Democrats suddenly brightened. The pursed rim of Pallone's mouth opened into a boyish smile, Slaughter's stretched lips curled upwards. Surprised by a reporter, Pallone tried unsuccessfully to make his face return to ashen sobriety. "This is not about getting points for one side or the other," he insisted, as his lips crept north. "But, but, but the public would surely blame the Republicans—*it would be all their fault.*"

Pallone and Slaughter are not the only Democrats giddy at the prospect of Train Wreck II. Many liberal Democrats on the Hill have been dreaming for months about killing a GOP-designed budget plan that they never wanted in the first place; Minority Leader Dick Gephardt has even denounced the package on the House floor. But, until just weeks ago, the hoped-for crash seemed like an impossibility: after all, the Republicans and the Clinton White House had hammered out a deal after months of negotiations.

Yet, with GOP leaders bizarrely plotting a coup against Speaker Newt Gingrich, some in the White House suddenly think they, too, should replay—or at least raise the specter of—the government shutdown of 1995: an event that resurrected Clinton's presidency and that could now, they think, secure a Democratic House in 1998. "Getting Train Wreck II and getting everyone to understand that it was all the Republicans' fault is exactly what we always dreamed of," says a senior White House aide, sunnily candid in anonymity. "Mind you, we never thought we'd get it to happen, until maybe now."

What's truly amazing, though, is that the White House and liberal Democrats are not the only ones dreaming about colliding engines of government. A small band of hardcore conservative lawmakers also believe that shutting down the government is preferable to passing a budget that compromises their fiscal agenda. Some even dream—less than a year after nearly surrendering the House because of the last shutdown—that they can win the public relations battle the second time around. "The people are behind us on this one," explained one GOP hard-liner. "If we get a shutdown and tell the people this is because we want to lower your taxes, that policy will play in Peoria. Clinton saying this shutdown is about us trying to take more of your money and regulate your life won't."

All of which has made the once unthinkable plausible: a second budgetary wreck in two years or at the very least, as the White House hopes, a near-collision avoided at the last minute by a "mature" president reining in a seemingly infantile GOP Congress. Both sides are already well into the duel of fiscal chicken. Earlier this month, Clinton took aim at GOP negotiators and insisted that some Medicare reforms be administered by the IRS—a "poison pill" to Republicans who fear being accused of raising taxes. A couple of days later, Republicans inserted in the tax proposals their own poison pill—a complicated capital gains provision that Clinton has vowed to veto.

Such machinations have Hill progressives happily dusting off their scripts from two years ago. On July 22, Gephardt's office distributed a six-page "special report" to the press titled "Here They Go Again . . .," half of which literally recycled quotes from the previous train wreck. "Republicans," Gephardt declared, "are once again putting themselves in a position to use a government shutdown to force their extreme agenda on the country."

The White House has already seen the results of a Democratic pollster's survey assessing public reaction to the idea of another government shutdown. The results were delightful. White House aides this past weekend gleefully pointed to the survey, which says 82 percent of Americans would blame the GOP for shutting down the government. That's more than blamed the Republicans in the last crash.

The GOP's disastrous internal politics give Democrats good reason to be smug. For perhaps the first time since he became speaker in 1994, Gingrich desperately needs them. The speaker has become so isolated that his once-expansive galaxy of advisers and admirers has shrunk to a small claque, including conservative fringe figures like Michael Ledeen, an early player in the Iran-Contra affair. Many Republicans, including several rebels, agree with the desperation-tinged assessment that House Appropriations Committee Chairman Bob Livingston offered last week to *The Wall Street Journal*: "[A]t this point in time, we need a deal." Only a solid budget deal with the Democrats, the Republican realists figure, can revive the speaker's standing and quell future coup attempts. And this, in the wonderfully self-immolating logic of the GOP firebrands, is exactly why there mustn't be a deal.

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As a result, Democrats believe they are in a win-win scenario: they can either extract concessions now from House Republicans, until the budget looks more like a Democratic one, or pummel concessions out of them after the train wreck. Among some aides in the White House, this is known as the "Pretty Please Plan." "The coup has made Newt Gingrich need us more than ever," explains a senior White House aide. "So now is our opportunity to get what we want."

They're probably right. The shake-up at the House's very top has energized a handful of hard-line conservatives who think there's now enough dissent within the party that they could actually derail the budget negotiations. Gingrich loyalists say those Republicans rooting to kill the deal are small in numbers, which may be the case. But that does little to reassure the speaker, who barely survived a coup of just twenty legislators. Indeed, White House officials think the coup has left the House leadership vulnerable to mini-coalitions like the hard-liners. Those coalitions, they say, will pressure the House to pass a bill that the White House can politically veto. "It doesn't take that many members, when you have this slim of a majority, to throw something one way or another," worried a Gingrich loyalist. "And throwing the momentum at this stage in the game could really foul things up."

Democrats, meanwhile, are fat and happy with gloat. Shortly after news broke that the House leadership was involved in a failed coup, three Democratic congressmen who sit on the Budget and Appropriations committees shared cigars in their nonsmoking offices. "Look, they basically want to give a tax break to the rich. That's what they're all about," said one, a liberal member of the House Budget Committee. "If the government shuts down, that's all we have to say." He paused, showing the vague hints of a smile. "The voters are not going to buy it and we'll beat them up again." •

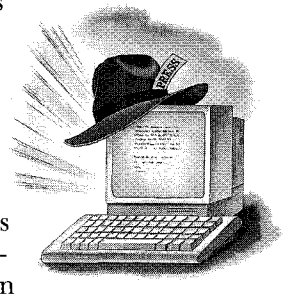
JAKARTA DISPATCH

RIADY'S BANK SHOT

By Bob Drogin

An hour's drive west of Jakarta, past lush rice paddies and squalid shantytowns, Lippo Karawaci suddenly looms out of the landscape, like the Emerald City of Oz. Giant office towers and luxury condominiums soar into the hazy sky. Newly paved roads wind by bubbling fountains and streetlights modeled on Victorian gas lamps. A half-dozen American-style suburbs are lined with salmon and beige stucco townhouses and villas, all with matching garbage cans out front. Nearby, Indonesia's largest shopping mall features an indoor roller coaster and Saturday-night fireworks, a six-screen cinema, the country's first Walmart, plus Toys 'R' Us and JC Penney stores. Down the road, a plush country club offers an eighteen-hole golf course and horse stables. A 328-bed hospital boasts state-of-the-art care. Last, but surely not least among Lippo Karawaci's charms, is the private Hope International School—named for the hometown of the president of the United States.

James Tjahaja Riady, the 41-year-old Indonesian tycoon and part-time White House tour guide, is the founder of the vast 5,900-acre Karawaci complex. He lives near the Hope school, in a new home that is more castle than mansion. Massive and mostly marble, it sits on its own island, ringed by a moat filled with geese. A sentry stands stiffly at the tall, spiked iron gate that blocks the small bridge like a portcullis. Gardeners tend lush gardens and hanging baskets of orchids near the helicopter landing pad. Somewhere inside is Riady's Southeast Asian art collection. His full-time curator buys in bulk at Sotheby's and Christie's auctions in Singapore. Last October, he paid $30,700 for a small Balinese painting, double the expected auction price and triple the owner's cost less than a year ago. "I asked Riady later if he likes it," the Australian seller told me. "He didn't even know he'd bought it. He said, 'Look, I buy a lot.' "



The question in Washington is what Riady was trying to buy at the Clinton White House. Senate committee hearings are trying to determine if Riady and current and former colleagues at his family-run Lippo Group conglomerate illegally funneled vast sums of cash into the Democratic Party during the 1996 presidential campaign. Also at issue is whether former Lippo executive John Huang secretly passed classified information to the Chinese Embassy when he was working at the Commerce Department and while he was raising millions of dollars from Asian American donors for the Democrats.

These are not questions Riady apparently wants to answer. He ducked Senate investigators who flew to Jakarta this summer. He told the U.S. Embassy he was taking his family on a cruise in the Mediterranean from early June until the end of July. Actually, he was in Hong Kong for the June 30 midnight handover to China, and flew back to Jakarta with his bodyguards a few days later. "Go easy on me," he pleaded to a local reporter who spotted him on the flight.

But, if Senate investigators ever do catch up with Riady, they might be surprised. The man behind the curtains is not quite the financial or political wizard he's reputed to be, and what he thought he was buying with his free-spending support of the Clinton re-election effort is not necessarily what the critics suspect.

Mochtar Riady, James Riady's father, established the family fortune in the 1970s by building a network of retail banks across Indonesia. Since the late 1980s, son James has taken the Lippo empire into the far riskier world of real estate: satellite cities like Lippo Karawaci,

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giant department stores and speculative investments in China's Fujian province, the family homeland. Unlike his father, James Riady likes publicity. Bright neon signs with Lippo's name and its distinctive red logo, a double infinity symbol, pepper the skylines of Jakarta and Hong Kong. "They regularly buy the naming rights of buildings," explained stock analyst Michael Backman. "They may only have a small office up there, but their name is out front. They look bigger than they actually are."

In reality, it's difficult to judge how big Lippo actually is. Corporate assets and liabilities are constantly juggled in murky restructurings or hidden in offshore accounts and private holding companies here and abroad. Maysa Spek, head of research at PT Rachid Hussain Securities, estimates the Riady family empire is worth $1 billion. That's not chump change, but it's not the $12 billion usually cited in the U.S. press reports, either. The gap is largely due to James Riady's brain child, Karawaci.

Buying up huge tracts of land during the 1980s, Riady figured Jakarta's emerging middle class would flee growing crime and pollution in the capital for a sylvan suburban life. But Karawaci is far from Jakarta, and 20 percent interest rates have pushed housing prices too high. In November 1995, a year after the project first broke ground, rumors that Karawaci was failing caused a $500 million run on Lippo-owned banks. "You need to be strong enough to follow the project through," Riady told nervous investors when Lippo Land went public last year. "I call this having stomach."

Riady's stomach must be in knots these days. Many, if not most, of the Karawaci homes are unoccupied. Others house Lippo employees, stock brokers and other company friends given freebies or special discounts. On a recent Sunday, the Century Hotel had a few guests and the Imperial golf course looked deserted. Free buses filled the mall with families, but most hit only the fast-food shops. Shop clerks sat on their hands in silent stores. "They decided to build entire cities, based on a *Field of Dreams* idea," said Eugene Galbraith, managing director of ABN Amro Hoare Govett Asia, an investment bank. "You know, 'If you build it they will come,' a half million people. Well, they haven't come."

Contrary to press reports, the Riadys were never close to President Suharto, the military strongman who has ruled Indonesia since 1966. Suharto and his family have made billions through sweetheart deals, government monopolies and lucrative government licenses. Cronies and favored friends, mostly army generals and local politicians, have grown rich with them. But, said a longtime Riady family friend, "Lippo has never had the right connections."

With the danger of James Riady's real estate gambles hanging over Lippo, the family's need for a better, more lucrative, relationship with the Indonesian government grew more pressing. Here, James Riady possessed something of potential value. He knew Bill Clinton. The two men had met in 1977 in Little Rock, Arkansas, when Riady was an ambitious young banker and Clinton was an ambitious young state attorney general. Their friendship had blossomed over the years. Riady's associates in Jakarta believe his contributions to the DNC were intended to gain Oval Office access not primarily to influence the U.S. government, but, in a bank shot, his own. "They were looking to enhance their status in Jakarta by showing they were players in the U.S.," said the family friend. A former Lippo executive who accompanied Riady to Clinton's 1992 inauguration says Riady "was packaging his relationship with Clinton to get more favors from Suharto."

If this is what Riady had in mind, the scheme backfired badly. Fallout from the U.S. scandal has helped sink relations between Washington and Jakarta to the worst level in years. "Now, if anyone stands up for Indonesia in Washington, people will say, 'Ahh, Riady paid you.' " complained Sofjan Wanandi, a rival tycoon who leads the Gemala Group conglomerate. American business executives fear the flap may affect commercial trade. "I think it has paralyzed U.S. relations in regard to Indonesia," grumbled Louis A. Clinton (no relation to the president), who heads the American Chamber of Commerce in Indonesia.

Since the Riady fund-raising scandal emerged, American complaints about Indonesia have intensified and drawn far more attention. The House of Representatives voted unanimously on June 10 to condemn the Suharto regime's appalling human rights record in secessionist East Timor, the Portuguese colony Indonesia annexed in 1976. And the State Department publicly rebuked Jakarta for fraud and polling abuses in recent legislative elections. Suharto lashed back, complaining to Clinton in a letter of the "wholly unjustified criticism" in Congress. He angrily canceled plans to buy nine American F-16 fighter jets, a deal Clinton personally pitched during Suharto's 1995 state visit to the White House, and sent a thirty-member delegation to Moscow to inspect Russian jets and helicopters instead.

As it has turned away from the U.S., Indonesia now turns toward China. China is still demonized in Indonesia as the Communist menace, bent on conquest. Chinese-language publications and even the use of Chinese names are banned in the country; local Chinese shops and churches are regularly burned in riots. But the heightened American criticism of Indonesian values is making China look more and more attractive. "Now relations with China are becoming much better," said analyst Christianto Wibisono, "because they both share the same distrust of the U.S. They don't like the U.S. trying to impose Western democracy and Western values."

In any case, American values are not especially valued in Indonesia these days. "A lot of people are making fun," economist Umar Juoro, head of the Institute for National Development Studies, said with a grin. "My friends say, 'Look how cheap Riady bought Clinton.' A few hundred thousand dollars! Even Suharto must be laughing. He costs billions."

BOB DROGIN is a foreign correspondent for *The Los Angeles Times.*

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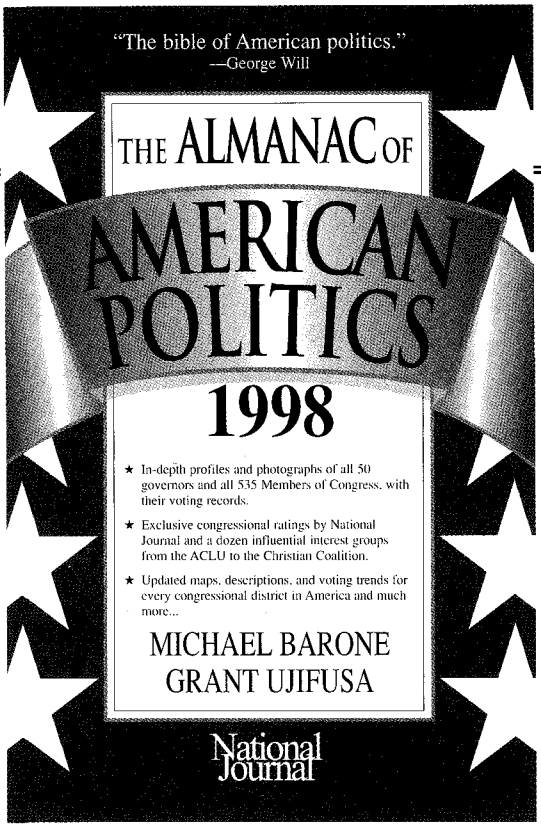
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More trouble with the Teamsters.

CASH AND CAREY

By Jeffrey Goldberg

One day this past January, in a closet-sized room in a Washington office building, an obscure Teamster named John Murphy stumbled upon a startling document. The document revealed the existence of an organization called Teamsters for a Corruption-Free Union—an organization that, in the fullness of time, would be shown to count no Teamsters as members and to be unfree of corruption itself. The document had been filed with federal officials in the waning days of last year's tumultuous Teamster election, which pitted incumbent President Ron Carey—the man reputed to have rid the Teamsters of mobsters—against James P. Hoffa—son of the famously corrupt and presumably deceased union boss.

Carey narrowly won that election, to the cheers of union reformers everywhere, but, in the aftermath of Murphy's discovery, the Justice Department has refused to certify the victory. Instead, it awaits the judgment of a federally appointed election monitor whose ruling on the election's validity is expected soon. If the monitor overturns the results, Hoffa would probably win a rematch—assuming, that is, Carey even ran again.

Already, the document's discovery has led to the uncovering of an alleged money-laundering scheme launched to assist Carey's campaign, carried out with the help of a prominent liberal activist group and orchestrated by a key Carey supporter. Whatever the federal election monitor decides, it seems clear from the available evidence that Carey's supporters employed unethical and illegal campaign tactics—even as they were accusing Hoffa's forces of similarly questionable activities.

Amid the investigations and criminal charges, one question lingers. Murphy, a Hoffa supporter, came across the paper while inspecting documents made available at the offices of the federally appointed Teamster election monitor. Yet why didn't the official, Barbara Zack Quindel, notice it first? Indeed, why did Murphy, the head of a small-time beer drivers' local union, discover something that neither the Justice Department (which closely monitors Teamster activities), nor a quasi-governmental investigations board (which oversees the Teamsters), nor a federal judge (who oversees the investigations board), had discovered on their own? "It's amazing to me that the entire government couldn't find what I found," says Murphy.

One, relatively charitable, explanation for this collective error is that federal officials were so eager to promote the cause of reform—a cause they believed Carey championed and Hoffa would destroy—that they turned a blind eye to election shenanigans on Carey's behalf. A less charitable explanation—one advanced by Carey's opponents on Capitol Hill and within the Teamsters—is that federal watchdogs went soft on Carey because, under his leadership, the Teamsters had become a source of political support and campaign contributions for the Democratic Party. According to press accounts and sources within the Teamsters, the Justice Department is investigating connections between campaign finance fraud schemes at both the Democratic National Committee and the union.

Three years ago, when I began gathering material for an article about the Teamsters that eventually appeared in *New York* magazine, I entered the story, like most reporters, prepared to like Carey and dislike Hoffa. Hoffa fulfilled my expectations. He is an empty suit, powered to celebrity on the strength of his mythical name alone. He is also a former business partner of Allen Dorfman, the master pension thief and stepson of Capone ally Paul "Red" Dorfman. (And, in the Teamsters, there is such a thing as guilt by association: according to the federally approved rules governing Teamster affairs, association with a known organized crime figure can get a Teamster member expelled for life.) During the course of an unintentionally hilarious weekend at a Las Vegas Teamster meeting, I found Hoffa to be interested in blackjack and uninterested in the challenges of trade unionism. His cronies, many of whom were on his election slate last year, were, in the main, louts and brutes.

Carey, too, fulfilled expectations—at first. I found Carey's anti-goombah rhetoric appealing, and he charmed me, as he charms many reporters, with his complete lack of style. But, in looking into Carey's past, unsettling allegations surfaced—stories about Carey's alliance with a mob-connected Teamster leader; about his vouching in court for a member of his local union who was also an organized crime figure; about Louis

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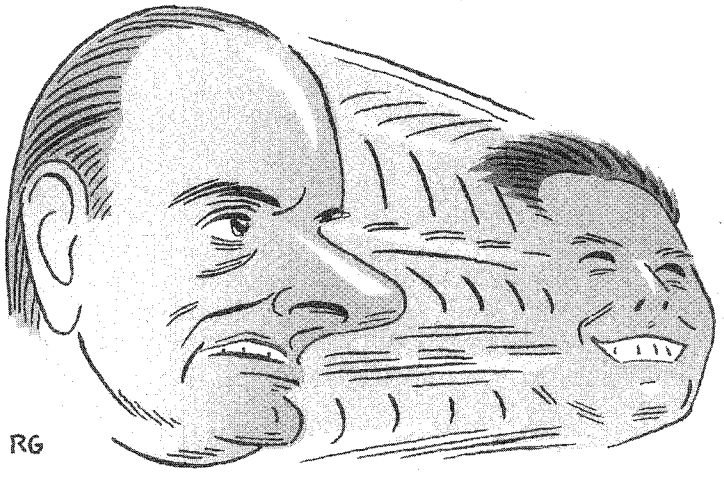
Sunshine, a Mafia bagman whose friends say passed instructions to Carey on behalf of his crime bosses; about accusations that Carey tried to keep a mobbed-up Kennedy Airport Teamster local in the hands of the Lucchese crime family; about the testimony of Alphonse D'Arco, a former Lucchese chieftain who told FBI investigators that Carey is a Lucchese associate; about the implausible ways in which Carey amassed his real estate empire; and about his supposedly clean local, which, it turned out, was secretly funding a loan-sharking ring.

Carey denies knowing about the loan-shark operation, as he denies everything—coincidence topping coincidence, according to his spokesmen. But in my three months of reporting, which included on-the-record interviews with firsthand witnesses to illegal activity within Carey's local, I found the allegations credible enough to warrant a Justice Department investigation. No such investigation was ever launched. Instead, the department has deferred to a quasi-governmental investigation board called the Independent Review Board (IRB), which is supposed to be neutral but, according to critics, is partial to Carey.

The IRB was created in 1989, after a consent decree was struck between the Teamsters and the Justice Department, which had sued the union to rid it of mob influence. The IRB, which possesses the court-ordained power to expel dirty Teamsters from the union, is chaired by a former federal judge named Frederick Lacey, who was appointed to the IRB in 1989. The IRB's most eminent member is William Webster, former director of both the FBI and the CIA.



DRAWING BY ROBERT GROSSMAN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

In 1994, the IRB issued a report clearing Carey of all charges of corruption, but there's reason to question the report's credibility. A letter that Lacey wrote to Thomas Puccio, the New York lawyer who is the court-appointed trustee of a mobbed-up Teamster local at Kennedy Airport, suggests that Lacey was sympathetic to Carey from the start. The letter, written a few months before the IRB report came out, was prompted by Puccio's freelance investigation into Carey's alleged mob ties. Puccio's chief aide at the time, an ex-Labor Department investigator named Michael Moroney, became convinced after interviewing D'Arco that Carey was tainted. Lacey, in his letter to Puccio, warned the lawyer of the consequences of Moroney's investigation: "... You and Mr. Moroney ought to have in mind what would happen if you brought Carey down in that there were 'old guard' Teamsters throughout the country that were hoping that Carey would be eliminated as a candidate in 1996 so that the clock could be turned back to what it was when I first came on the scene as Independent Administrator." The letter is notable for the naïveté with which the former federal judge shows his hand. Lacey didn't return telephone calls seeking comment.

The Lacey letter was prompted by Carey's lawyer at the time, Charles F.C. Ruff, who is now counsel to President Clinton. Ruff had complained to Lacey about the freelance investigation of Carey. The details of Ruff's work for Carey are unclear, but one thing he did do was aid in the hiring of the Palladino & Sutherland detective agency, which was paid $150,000 out of the Teamsters' budget for services it won't disclose. Jack Palladino is most famous for his work on behalf of Clinton during the 1992 presidential race in shutting down "bimbo eruptions." A secretary at his firm said that Palladino "won't return phone calls about the Teamsters."

Had the IRB or the Justice Department been monitoring the Carey camp as carefully as it monitors Hoffa and his allies, it might have unearthed the document that Murphy eventually stumbled across. Federal prosecutors say that the document is the key to what they believe was a complicated scheme that allowed Carey's supporters to channel money from the Teamsters' general union fund into Carey's re-election war chest—in clear violation of the law. The key players in the scheme, prosecutors say, were Michael Ansara, a former student radical who owns a telemarketing firm based in Boston; Teamsters for a Corruption-Free Union, a group which turned out to be a front for Carey's re-election bid; Citizen Action, a national grass-roots organization ostensibly dedicated to "good government"; and Martin Davis, a political consultant whom prosecutors believe was the plan's mastermind.

According to investigators, the scheme worked as follows: last year the Teamsters paid more than $97,000 to Share Group, Ansara's telemarketing firm, to make calls on behalf of Teamster-friendly Democrats running for Congress. But a Teamsters official asked Share not to make all of the calls it was supposed to make; Ansara took the leftover money and funneled it to his wife, who then wrote a check for $95,000 to Teamsters for a Corruption-Free Union. That group, in turn, passed the money on to a consulting organization called the November Group, a now-defunct telemarketing and fund-raising firm that last year did work for the Democratic National Committee. One of the two principals in the November Group was Davis. The November Group used the money to finance the mailing of a million pro-Carey fliers to union members at the same

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time the election ballots were mailed.

As an employer, Ansara cannot make donations to the campaigns of union officials. Also, the scheme meant that Teamster general funds ended up paying for part of Carey's re-election bid.

And that's not the end of it. Apparently, the money left over from the original payment to Share didn't cover the full amount of Ansara's wife's donation. But, at about the same time this was happening, prosecutors say, Citizen Action paid Ansara $75,000 for "consulting work." Prosecutors believe that payment was meant as partial reimbursement for his wife's donation to the Teamsters. This is crucial because, earlier, Citizen Action had received a $475,000 donation from the Teamsters—a donation that was supposed to be financing independent expenditures on behalf of Teamster-friendly Democrats running for Congress. So in effect, prosecutors say, Citizen Action—which is currently plagued by additional and unrelated scandals—kicked back $75,000 of the $475,000 Teamster gift, only it kicked it back to Carey's campaign, not the union's general fund. Again, general union money ended up financing Carey's campaign.

According to Teamster spokeswoman Nancy Stella, Carey knew nothing of the scheme. A Carey spokesman, John Bell, blames the former campaign director, a man named Jere Nash—a "rogue campaign manager," in Bell's estimation. "You've got to understand—Carey basically placed his campaign in a blind trust," Bell explains. (Nash declined to comment.) But Carey chose Nash to run his campaign at the suggestion of Martin Davis. If Carey was close enough to Davis to trust his advice on selecting a campaign manager, how could he not have known about the money-laundering scheme?

As for the other figures, Ansara's business partner, George Bachrach, suggests that his friend was merely an idealistic dupe of unnamed malefactors. "Michael Ansara has had a lifelong commitment to progressive causes and had a strong commitment to clean up the Teamsters with Ron Carey," Bachrach says. "That's what led him into this very regrettable circumstance. It was absolutely ideological, and he was misled by other actors who got him involved," he says, apparently referring to Davis. Ansara has pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy and is now cooperating with federal authorities; Davis, who is pleading not guilty to charges of mail fraud, is reported to be working with investigators, too. Davis won't talk to the press, and his lawyer could not be reached for comment. A Citizen Action spokesman did not return phone calls.

The close ties between Carey and so many liberal activists is no coincidence. To many liberals, Carey had become something of a hero—not merely because he cleaned up (or appeared to clean up) such a notoriously corrupt union but also because he helped repair the breach between blue-collar workers and the Democratic Party. Virtually alone among unions, the Teamsters in the 1970s and 1980s supported Republicans. But when Carey took over, in 1991, he brought the Teamsters back into the Democratic fold. During the last election cycle, the Teamsters donated nearly $2.5 million in hard money to Democrats. And, according to a memo written last August by former DNC Finance Director Richard Sullivan, the Democrats expected DRIVE, the Teamsters' political action committee, to donate hundreds of thousands of dollars in soft money to state Democratic parties. "We would like contributions of $5,000 from the DRIVE Political Fund to be made payable to each of the following state parties," Sullivan wrote to Martin Davis, the same Martin Davis whom prosecutors believe masterminded the money-laundering scandal. In the memo, Sullivan lists seventeen state parties and, on the next page, tells Davis how much money the other state parties should receive from DRIVE—$277,600 to the California party, for instance. Stella, the Teamsters spokeswoman, says, "we don't know whether we received" the request list, which had been faxed to a Teamster official.

Could Clinton administration officials, eager to keep Carey in power, have encouraged federal officials to overlook evidence of Carey's corruption? The fact that Democrats took Teamster donations—and that Harold Ickes, a former high-ranking administration official, is close to Carey—does raise questions about the administration's willingness to scrutinize Carey's record. So does the fact that Ruff, Carey's old lawyer, now works for Clinton. And there is no denying the importance of Teamster support for the Democrats: the union, with its DRIVE operation, is one of the great cash cows of politics, representing the possibility of many millions in contributions over coming election cycles.

Still, the possibility of overt subversion by the White House of the government's supervision of the Teamsters seems at this point remote. So far at least, no evidence has emerged that anybody in the White House tried to influence the Carey-Hoffa election, or the investigation into Carey's stewardship of the union. The Independent Review Board's members were not appointed by Clinton, so their complicity in a Clinton fund-raising scandal seems unlikely. And, although the Justice Department ostensibly could have intervened directly if it had evidence of corruption, it might have been reluctant to step onto the IRB's jurisdiction.

What is more likely than overt subversion of the federal role is more a matter of climate control. Knowing that Carey's Teamsters were a valuable source for Democratic contributions (and that these contributions would disappear in a Hoffa-run Teamsters) could only have encouraged the watchdogs' natural inclination to favor the "progressive" Carey faction over the Hoffa crowd. Even today, some Carey opponents doubt that Barbara Zack Quindel, the federal election monitor, would like to see Carey's victory annulled: it turns out she is married to a member of the board of the Wisconsin branch of Citizen Action. (That this has not yet been ruled a conflict of interest does not reflect well on the integrity of federal oversight in the Teamster case.) In the end, though, Quindel may have no choice but to overturn the election results, which could lead to a most perverse outcome: the federal government in essence handing the Teamsters presidency to a man named Jimmy Hoffa. •

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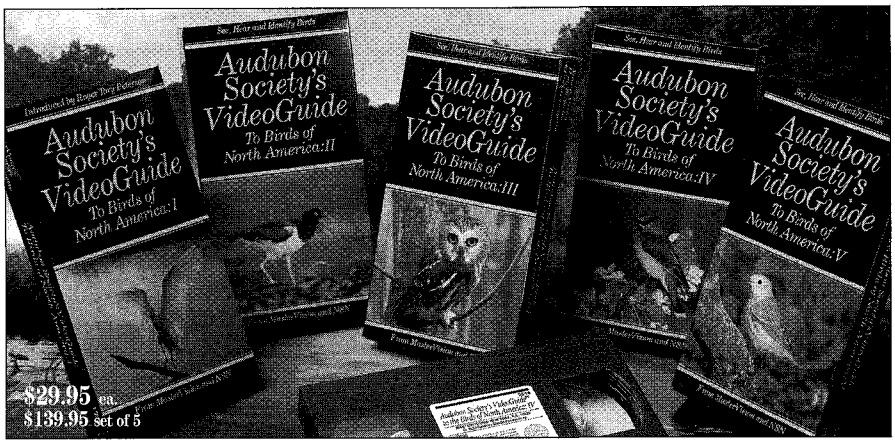
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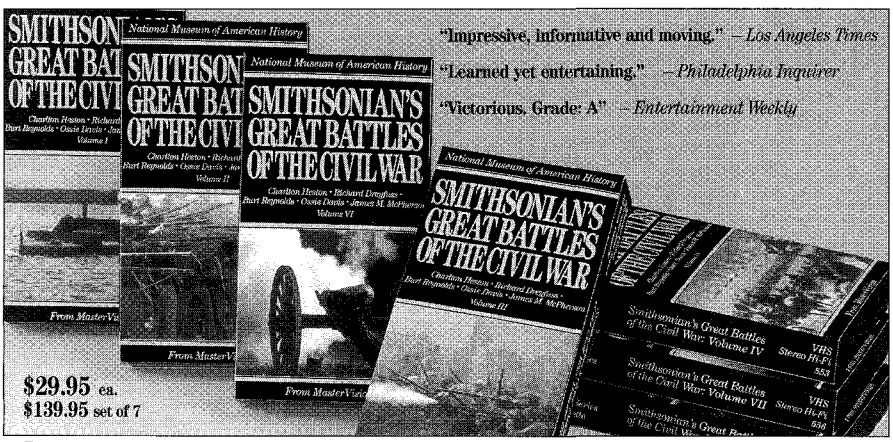
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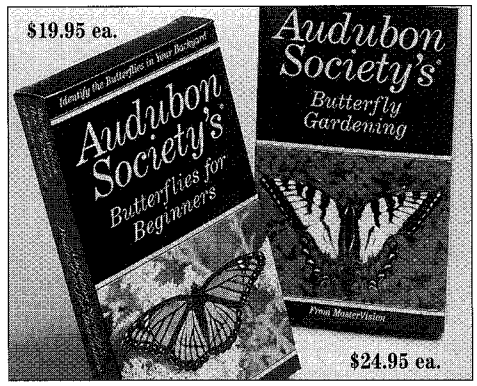

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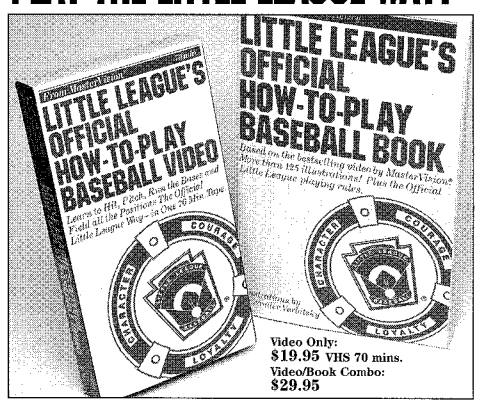
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A melting pot meltdown.

BAGHDAD ON THE PLAINS

By Margaret Talbot

There are many ways to become an American, some more arduous than others, but this, surely, was one of the hardest. They came from Iraq, where they had lived in the southern city of Nasiriyah. The father fixed cars, and business was so good that he one day opened his own mechanic's shop, and built a house for his family of four daughters. They prospered, but they prospered in the shadow of Saddam Hussein. The father hated Saddam, and when the U.S. and its allies laid siege to Iraq, he refused to join the army. Instead, he drove his family through the desert, east to Safwan, a city then controlled by the U.S. military. With 30,000 other men, women and children, they were packed into a refugee camp near Rafha in Saudi Arabia, a dusty, dismal compound where there was never quite enough to eat or drink.

Nearly two years passed, and when they finally got word that the United States would take them in, it hardly mattered to them where in America they went. When their destination turned out not to be New York or any other place they'd ever heard of, but Lincoln, Nebraska, they said, so be it. On the drive to Lincoln, with the oldest girl chattering and the next oldest quiet as always, her breath filigreeing the window, the father thought that maybe they'd come, at last, to the right place. The sky in Nebraska was vast and scattered with spun-sugar clouds. On the road between Omaha and Lincoln, a thin band of Hardee's drive-thrus and U-Store-it signs (the oldest girl sounded out the strange words) gave way to miles and miles of corn and wheat fields, a soft ocher fabric stippled by cottonwoods.

Lincoln itself was clean and quiet, and in the well-stocked shops people smiled at you as they counted out your change. When a reporter from the newspaper came to interview him, the father was nervous—the habit of fear ingrained in Iraq ran too deep for him to be otherwise—but he told the reporter that he liked America: you could curse Saddam all you liked here.

Still, at times the father felt crushed by everything around him that was not Iraq, and not Islam. Even in Lincoln—which was not, he knew enough to be thankful now, New York—he saw girls who dressed in tight, bright clothes and entertained boys unchaperoned, though surely someone here must know that when a man and woman were alone together, Satan was their third.

All the teachers and the social workers told him how clever his oldest girl was, how quickly she'd learned English, how easily you might mistake her now, at 14, for an American teenager. But, to the father, that was no compliment. The girl was rebellious like an American teenager, too, and he suspected her of running around with boys. He asked the younger girl, who was 13, if her sister had a boyfriend, and when she couldn't answer, she would later say, he threatened her with a knife. He hit both girls, they claimed, with fists, shoes, a curling iron and a cord. He threatened to send them back to Iraq if they didn't behave. And, after a few weeks, he decided that what he would do was to get them married.

He knew two Iraqi men in town, Latif and Majed, who were also Shi'a from southern Iraq, also veterans of the Rafha camp. One was 34 years old and one was 28. They were good Muslims. And since both had jobs—one cooked in a restaurant, the other worked in a factory—they could afford a bride price.

So, on a bleary November day, there was a wedding in the family's living room. The cleric flew in from Ohio. The men slipped rings on the girls' fingers, and then the father and mother took them to the men's apartments and said to them: you live here now. The new husbands wanted to have sex with the girls right away to make sure they were virgins, and they did, though the older girl said that she begged the man not to touch her, and that he had to pin her down. On the third day, she ran away, to the home of a guy who used to hang out at her junior high school. His name was Mario; he was 20 years old, Mexican-American and very much interested in her.

When her father and husband came looking for her at school, somebody called the police, and the girls told the officers their story, which started the machinery of the law in motion. The girls were immediately placed in foster care. The father and mother were arrested, the father charged with child abuse, the mother with contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Since the father was initially ordered to stay away from anyone under 16, he could not return home with his wife and younger children, who ranged in age from four months to 9 years old. One evening, he shuffled up to his own doorstep and stood outside while his wife gathered up some

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clothes for him and stuffed them into a plastic bag. Latif and Majed were charged with sexual assault of a minor. Mario, with whom the girl had consensual sex in the days that she hid out with him, was charged with the same crime.

Through their lawyers and interpreters, the father and the grooms said they didn't know they had done anything illegal; that arranged marriage, even for very young girls, was the custom of their country, sanctioned by their faith; that it was all a terrible misunderstanding. To which the deputy county attorney, a woman named Jodi Nelson, replied: "You live in our state, you live by our laws."

At a juvenile court hearing that was to decide the family's fate, the mother wept openly. The younger girl wept softly. The father, who still doesn't speak much English, was heard to say that his life was over. They were, all of them, Americans now, and their story a kind of parable.

But a parable of what? Ever since the case of the arranged marriages first came to light last November, it has been attracting exegetes of various stripes. There were those who saw in it an ugly example of ethnocentrism. Why couldn't the family have been left to settle the matter on its own? And there were those who said that the law was the law. To treat the Iraqi defendants leniently would be to tell these girls, and other immigrants, they were not entitled to equal protection. In a way, it was an old, old story of immigration—the Americanizing rebellion of the second generation, the doomed intransigence of the first. And, in a way, it was new—a case that belonged to a thoroughly contemporary discussion about the proper limits of multiculturalism.

In April, the parents in the case, Salem and Salima Al-Saidy, pleaded no contest to child neglect charges in Lancaster County Juvenile Court. Since then, they have been required to take "parenting" and "anger control" classes, and when they complete them the court will decide whether their daughters can be sent back home. (The other child abuse charges against them will also be dropped if they make it through these programs.) The first of the two grooms, meanwhile, is scheduled to go to trial July 28. "An open trial for these guys is going to be a trauma for Lincoln," says one local man who works with refugees. "There's just no consensus on who's in the wrong and how or whether they should be punished, and this whole thing has been such a culture shock here."

Indeed, there is something more than peculiar about parking 500 to 1,000 Shi'ite Muslims from traditional southern Iraq in a small, ethnically homogeneous American city—the kind of town whose reigning passion is college football. But in recent years it has been the explicit policy of the U.S. government to resettle refugees in rural areas and towns like Lincoln, rather than in traditional gateway cities like Los Angeles or New York. If the newcomers aren't glommed together, the thinking goes, it's easier to absorb them into American society. And Lincoln, an amiable college town of about 200,000, had church groups willing to sponsor the Gulf war refugees as they had some 3,000 Vietnamese before them. "For us here in Lincoln, there's a lot of pride about taking these people in," says Patsy Vinogradov, who coordinates language training for refugees in Lincoln. "And I think that a lot of the refugees are happy to be here instead of Los Angeles or New York precisely because English is the dominant language here and because this is such a typical American city."

What Lincoln did not have, however, was an Arabic-speaking population, a beachhead of established immigrants to help the new arrivals ashore. Even the dedicated American volunteers working with the refugees had difficulty anticipating, as a compatriot might, where the blanks in their understanding of American culture might be. Vinogradov, for example, had to comb the Internet for information on Islam. "Arranged marriage was certainly not something I'd ever had contact with," she says. "I mean, it wouldn't have occurred to me."

And these particular Muslim immigrants were not even much like earlier waves of Muslim immigrants—the educated, Westernized Lebanese and Iranians who came to the United States in the '50s and '60s, for example, and assimilated with relative ease. "Now the Muslim immigrants we're getting—Afghans, Iraqis, Kurds—are likely to be war refugees. And, in general, they're less educated and more conservative religiously and socially," says Yvonne Haddad, a University of Massachusetts professor who is co-author of *Islamic Values in the United States*. "Nobody asked me, but I think these Iraqi refugees might have been better off going to a place like Dearborn, Michigan, where you already have a lot of Muslims, other war refugees, even, who would have been able to tell them what's what here."

Most of the 10,000 Iraqi refugees accepted into the United States after the Gulf war were either Kurds from the north or, like the Al-Saidys, Shi'a from the south, the center of a 1991 uprising against Saddam Hussein and a bastion of traditional Muslim values. So, for example, while the legal marriage age in Iraq is, in fact, 18, "people in the south routinely ignore that," says Haddad. "They think it's too old, and they want to protect their daughters from temptation."

Still, this cultural distance might not have mattered so much if the Gulf war refugees had gotten a more extensive orientation to the United States. When the first Vietnamese refugees arrived in the U.S. in 1975, most had spent at least six months in resettlement camps at various Army bases across the country—camps complete with schools for the kids, English classes and vocational training for the adults. (Indeed, some refugees even felt they were being unduly pressured into adopting American values. A number of the Vietnamese parents were particularly offended when their teenagers were given lists of current American slang words for, among other things, drugs.) Generally speaking, the Vietnamese rode in on a wave of sympathetic public opinion and generous gov-

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ernment spending, recognized as fellow sufferers in a long and traumatic war that had, in one way or another, touched the lives of most Americans.

The aftermath of the Gulf war was different. Few of the Iraqi refugees came out of the camp at Rafha speaking much English, let alone knowing anything reliable about America. "My clients had no preparation or orientation," says Terrell Cannon, the lawyer representing the would-be husbands, Latif Al-Husseini and Majed Al-Tamimy. "And it's really pathetic because they were in that camp for four years, enough time to get a bachelor's degree. We would have been better off enlisting them in the U.S. military for four years. It would have been great PR for them, and they would have come out speaking English, even if every adjective began with an f." Once in the United States, the refugees got help with the practical stuff—getting a driver's license, finding a job, renting an apartment—from Catholic Social Services and other church groups, which also provided stipends for the first months. But it's not clear how much the Iraqis learned about American law or culture in the process, and even the church groups are wondering now if they did enough. "We in the resettlement agencies clearly need to do a better job orienting people," says Jerry Heydenberk, refugee coordinator for the Nebraska branch of the Church World Services. "Especially when it comes to American law."

With this kind of entry into American society, the real question may be why more of these roughly transplanted refugees haven't run afoul of American laws and customs, especially when it comes to family matters. And the short answer is they probably have; we just haven't heard about it. Phebe Marr, an Iraqi expert at the National Defense University, says, for example, that she knows of Islamic families in the U.S. who advertise for husbands for their young, sometimes underage, daughters. "I have a friend in Washington who had actually heard through the Iraqi grapevine that these girls in Lincoln were available," she says. "He was quite interested and sent his picture to the parents. Lucky for him, they picked someone else."

In Lincoln, a man named Mohammed Nassir, a kind of de facto spokesman for the Iraqi community, tells me something similar. "These kind of marriages happen all the time in our community," says Nassir. "Generally, the government doesn't care. Why should it? After all, young teenagers are getting pregnant all the time in this country, and the government is actually rewarding them—paying them with Food Stamps, and so on."

Nassir himself did not come here as a refugee but as a doctoral student in the physics department at the University of Nebraska. He speaks excellent English, professes to love Lincoln and is married to an American woman, a convert to Islam. Yet even he seems to miss the amenities of an old-country enclave. In his spare time, when he's not doing physics research or defending Iraqi marriage customs, Nassir has been trying to start a little grocery store that would sell Middle Eastern foods—the first of its kind in Lincoln. "I will try this market, and then, eventually, the community will establish other activities for itself—maybe a coffeehouse, maybe schools of our own, maybe a newspaper," he says wistfully.

In fact, these kinds of institutions—the Yiddish newspapers, the German schools, the Scandinavian churches—have always played a vital part in assimilating immigrants, softening and making sense of the transition to American life. It's easy to forget this, and easy in this era of renascent tribalism, to feel suspicious of any ethnically insular institution. Partly in response to the multiculturalist denigration of the melting pot, a kind of nostalgia has arisen about the golden age of assimilation—a sentimental conviction that when our great-grandparents came to these shores they happily unshackled themselves from the world of their fathers and immediately began burbling in English.

But the path, of course, was never that smooth, and many never traveled its full distance—just read Willa Cather. Of the Nebraska county where she grew up in the late nineteenth century, Cather wrote, "On Sunday we could drive to a Norwegian church and listen to a sermon in that language, or to a Danish or a Swedish church. We could go to the French Catholic settlement in the next county and hear a sermon in French, or into the Bohemian township and hear one in Czech.... In Nebraska our Czech settlements were large and very prosperous. I have walked about the streets of Wilber, the county seat of Saline County, for a whole day without hearing a word of English spoken."

Immigrant enclaves have been like comfort stations on the road to assimilation, the places where you learned from your own kind about the new kind you were bound to become. "Indeed," writes Jon Gjerde in *The Minds of the West*, a history of immigration to the rural Midwest, "a political environment that permitted immigrants to maintain their religious beliefs and converse in their home language worked to augment loyalties to the [American] nation. Newspapers and printed tracts instructed non-English speakers in the precepts, responsibilities, and rights inherent in the Republic." More recently, Vietnamese and Cuban refugees have proven this point again by moving away from the scattered locations where they were initially resettled and, like iron filings, clumping together again in places such as Los Angeles and Miami. The government can put immigrants where it likes; the loneliness of strangers, and especially of refugees, will impel them to find each other again.

In the past, though, self-contained immigrant communities coexisted with a generalized faith in what Peter Salins has called the assimilation contract—the idea that in exchange for tacit permission to retain much of their own culture, especially in the short term, immigrants would sign on to a kind of long-term project of Americanization. At a minimum, that entailed respecting American laws. But, in recent years, even this basic precept has been undermined by the increasing use, in courts across the country, of a kind of cultural defense for immigrants accused of crimes from

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child abuse to murder. If a crime here is not a crime in the defendant's own country, the thinking goes, then he should not be held as accountable for it as an American-born defendant would be.

Even if immigrants are aware of the law, argue some theorists of this defense, their cultural conditioning may be too powerful to allow them to comply with it. Other legal scholars, more radical in their embrace of subjective standards—more Cochranized, you might say—argue that not only immigrants, but also "marginalized sub-cultures" such as African Americans should be exempt from the full weight of the law, and indeed that the very notion of a uniform rule of law is ethnocentric.

Starting in the late '80s, the cultural defense produced a string of rather spectacular exonerations. At a 1989 trial in Brooklyn, for example, a Chinese immigrant named Dong Lu Chen admitted to bludgeoning his wife to death with a claw hammer after she told him she'd had an affair. It looked bad for the defense lawyers until they produced an anthropologist who testified that, in Chinese culture, the shame a husband felt when his wife cuckolded him was onerous enough to legitimate his killing her. Dong never served time; he was sentenced to five years probation on a reduced manslaughter charge. The verdict angered many women's groups, but Margaret Fung, the head of the Asian-American Defense and Education Fund, stood up for it at the time. Banning this kind of defense would, she said, "promote the idea that when people come to America they have to give up their way of doing things. That is an idea we cannot support."

In several cases involving the Hmong, Laotian hill people who came to the United States as refugees in the '70s and '80s, defendants accused by their victims of rape and abduction have, for reasons of cultural relativism, also received light sentences. In one such case, a young Laotian woman claimed she had been kidnapped from her office at Fresno City College and forced to have sexual intercourse with her alleged abductor, a man named Kong Moua. But after his lawyers presented testimony that in Hmong-style marriage-by-capture, the woman is *supposed* to put up a fight, Moua was charged with false imprisonment, rather than kidnapping or rape, and sentenced to a perfunctory 120 days in jail.

Often, such cases involve male defendants and female victims who have strayed outside their own culture's constraints on women. But not always. In California in the late '80s, for instance, it was lawyers for several Japanese *women* who, wielding cultural arguments, won more lenient treatment for their clients. In 1985, for example, a housewife named Fumiko Kimura drowned her two small children in the ocean at Santa Monica, but was saved before she could drown herself. Her arrest elicited letters from some 4,000 Japanese-Americans arguing that, in Japan, a mother-child suicide pact would be considered an honorable response to a husband's infidelity. Kimura was allowed to plead guilty to manslaughter and placed on five years probation. (By contrast, Susan Smith, the woman who drowned her two children in a South Carolina lake, was punished with life in prison.)

These are the notorious cases, and they are still rare. But critics of the cultural defense say that it has seeped into the justice system in other, subtler ways—for example, by discouraging prosecutors from filing charges in the first place, especially where contested practices like female circumcision are invoked. And they say that cultural evidence is increasingly offered in lower-profile family court cases involving child abuse or wife-beating.

In the Nebraska case, lawyers for both the parents and the grooms have deployed cultural arguments from the beginning. "Nobody ever told my client what the criminal laws were here in the United States, much less the state of Nebraska, much less the city of Lincoln," says Sanford Pollack, the lawyer for Salem Al-Saidy. "And nobody ever informed him about the differences in morals and customs." Pollack knows that simple ignorance of the law has never been considered sufficiently exculpatory, so he goes on, with anthropological zeal: "This whole situation transpired because this is how their parents did it, and their parents did it and their parents did it. Mr. Al-Saidy's wife was 12 when they got married. That was the norm."

The defense for the grooms is a little trickier. Since Nebraska's statutory rape law defines the crime as any sexual intercourse between a person 19 or older and a person 16 or younger, motive and intent don't matter; age alone makes the crime. In the last few months, Cannon, the lawyer for the grooms, has been talking about ordering age testing for the girls, pointing out that plenty of refugees have been assigned the wrong age, even the wrong name, by overworked bureaucrats. But, if that fails, he can still use cultural evidence to argue for more lenient sentencing. And here the leeway is considerable: if the men are convicted, they could be given anything from a one-year suspended sentence to fifty years in prison.

American views on men and women and marriage "put us in the minority position in the world," says Cannon. "You can say that without making a value judgment. That's just a fact. And it puts the American liberal in a classic quandary. On the one hand, he doesn't want to impose his views on other people—he's big on that—and, on the other hand," says Cannon, "he really does."

Which is true—liberals (and honest conservatives) are tortured by cases like these which seem to pit respect for other cultures and sympathy for miserable refugees against a belief in a certain autonomy—personhood, really—for women and children. And, given that, it comes as something of a relief to talk to Michelle Chaffee, whose indignation on behalf of the two girls she represents has a kind of blinkered, bull-headed purity. Chaffee, an ex-schoolteacher and a mother of four young sons, has worked on a number of child abuse cases. She can't help seeing the Iraqi case as more or less like those others and the cultural arguments as so much static on the line. "To me," she says, "if there's any cultural relevance to this, it's that child abuse is cross-

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cultural. When people abuse and neglect and terrorize children because it makes them feel better, it doesn't matter where they come from or what they do. At some point, the system has to come in and protect those who are too vulnerable to protect themselves."

What Chaffee says on behalf of her clients, a Duke law professor named Doriane Lambelet Coleman has been saying on behalf of a whole class of crime victims like them. Coleman, who is writing a book on the cultural defense, has lately emerged as one of its most eloquent critics. In the first place, she argues in a recent *Columbia Law Review*, the cultural defense is unnecessary, since the criminal justice system already allows defendants to raise "established, nondiscriminatory arguments," such as diminished capacity or provocation. More importantly, Coleman writes, "the use of cultural evidence risks a dangerous balkanization of the criminal law, where non-immigrant Americans are subject to one set of laws and immigrant Americans to another. This is a prospect that is inconsistent not only with one of the law's most fundamental objectives, the protection of society and *all* of its members from harm, but also with the important human and civil rights doctrines embodied in the Equal Protection Clause."

There was a time in this country when we accepted a separate standard of justice for whites and blacks, and a time when we rarely bothered to prosecute an immigrant so long as his crime was committed against one of his own kind. Whatever they did in Chinatown or Little Italy on a Saturday night—whatever they did to their wives and daughters, in particular—was their business. As a society, we gradually turned against that approach, accepting, in the name of fundamental fairness and our common humanity, the notion that a black American, or a Greek, or an Irish or a Chinese immigrant who falls victim to a crime is entitled to the same safeguards as a native-born white. At some fundamental level, the cultural defense is just a return to that old order under the voguish rubric of cultural "sensitivity."

In the Nebraska case, the girls deserved the protection of American law, even if it embodied a notion of rights that had no place in the world of their father. Besides, the same American legal system that he now sees as persecuting him would protect him in other circumstances; that, too, is part of the contract the immigrant makes with his adopted society. That's not to say that if it comes to sentencing the two would-be husbands, their status as raw, new refugees shouldn't be taken into account; only that charging them in the first place was reasonable and just.

What the cultural relativists among us have never been able to answer is how to proceed when the minority cultures whose autonomy they defend are at odds not just with the majority, but with themselves. Yet, for immigrants in particular, deep, even tragic conflict—about what to hold on to, what to discard—is the condition of life. Salem Al-Saidy is a Muslim refugee from Iraq. So are his daughters. But what that identity entailed meant something very different to him than it did to them. Whose side are we on? •

The new Latino-Jewish alliance.

NEW BEDFELLOWS

By Peter Beinart

The block of Roosevelt Avenue between 82nd and 83rd Streets in Queens spans less than a football field. It is inhabited by the following: the Tiepas Colombians restaurant, Martinez Cargo Express, Protestia Dental, Señora Adela (an astrologer), Cúpido Travel, Jimmy's Ecuador Travel, El Rinconcito (a music shop), Mayra E. Tang Enterprises, the June Deli, Pilatos (a hairdresser), Metropolitan House (a furniture store), Libby's Travel, Jairo's Enterprises (international money transfer), Jerusalem Home Decor, Four Seasons Dresses, Photo Discount, Sharks Clothes Store, an attorney's office, a dressmaker, an income tax preparer, an employment agency, a sporting goods store and, at 8218 Roosevelt Avenue, next to Jairo's Enterprises, a store with no apparent name—just some shirts hanging on a rack in an open doorway. All in all, twenty-three tiny commercial establishments, not a chain store among them. And this is only the right-hand side of the block.

Roosevelt Avenue is a main thoroughfare in the neighborhood of Jackson Heights, and, from 80th Street to 110th Street, it is one of the key thoroughfares of Latino Queens. Queens is home to New York's newest Latino immigrants: Colombians, Dominicans, Ecuadoreans and Mexicans. Twenty years ago, these groups barely existed in New York. Today, they are among the fastest-growing segments of the city's Latino population, and they have changed New York from a city where most

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Latinos were Puerto Rican to one where Puerto Ricans no longer constitute the Latino majority.

If depression and dysfunction remain the sociological stereotypes of Latino America, you won't encounter them on Roosevelt Avenue. Latinos in Queens have a rate of welfare dependency half that of Latinos in the largely Puerto Rican Bronx. Jackson Heights boasts a full-size supermarket, something East Harlem does not yet have, and three Latino-owned banks. Latinos in Assembly District 34—the only majority Latino district in Queens and home to parts of Jackson Heights—are twice as likely to be middle class as Latinos in Assembly District 74, the largest Puerto Rican district in the Bronx.

And the political stereotype—left-liberalism—doesn't fit, either. True, in 1996, Bill Clinton won over 80 percent of the vote in Queens Assembly District 34. Registered Democrats outnumber Republicans by close to 4 to 1. But, according to a survey by the Hispanic Federation of New York this June, 69 percent of Dominicans and 58 percent of other non-Puerto Rican Latinos back a five-year limit on welfare payments. And in 1993, in this immigrant, minority district, Republican challenger Rudolph Giuliani beat incumbent Democratic Mayor David Dinkins by a margin of 2 to 1. Among Latinos in Queens, polls show Giuliani easily defeating Ruth Messinger, the likely Democratic nominee, this fall.

There is perhaps no more unmistakable sign of modern Orthodox Judaism than kosher Chinese food. On Riverdale Avenue in the Riverdale section of the Bronx you can find it in abundance. Near the top of the street is Szechuan Garden. A sign in the window announces, "We are now closed Saturday nights except for special events," which means the owners are tired of reopening the restaurant after Shabbat ends on Saturday night and staying late into the night while teenagers socialize. Down the block is Main Event, an over-the-counter joint that also offers up the odd dish of kosher lo mein.

Of the nine preteens and teenagers downing pizza and falafel at Main Event on a recent Sunday, three wore exposed yarmulkes, the other six wore baseball caps—almost certainly covering yarmulkes—and all nine wore Knicks, Mets or Giants paraphernalia. There was not a black hat in the restaurant, and *payess* protruded from not a single sideburn. Jewish Riverdale may not be the Upper West Side—it's more observant and less yuppie—but it's not Borough Park or Crown Heights, either. Riverdale is more modern Orthodox than Hasidic, and you can see the tensions and compromises of modern Orthodoxy on the street. At West 235th Street and Johnson Avenue is Nathan's Kosher Meat, and across from it stands the Riverdale Fish Company, which defiantly boasts "Fish-Shrimps-Lobster."

Like the Latinos of Jackson Heights, the Jews of Riverdale gave Bill Clinton over 80 percent of their votes last fall. Democrats outnumber Republicans in the area more than 4 to 1. And, also as in Jackson Heights, Rudy Giuliani crushed David Dinkins here, winning 65 percent in 1993.

In a million ways, Jackson Heights and Riverdale have nothing in common. But, politically, they are the same, and in this the two neighborhoods point to a broader convergence. At the ballot box, if not yet in the minds of politicians and community activists, Latinos and Jews are in political alliance. In city after city, state after state, the two groups vote the same way. What they do not do—to the great surprise of leaders in both communities—is vote like African Americans.

Consider the following. This spring, in Los Angeles, moderate Republican Mayor Richard Riordan won 70 percent of the Jewish vote and 60 percent of the Latino vote against liberal-left Democrat Tom Hayden. Hayden won three-quarters of the black vote. In 1989, in Chicago, conservative white Democrat Richard Daley won over 80 percent of the Jewish and Latino votes against incumbent black liberal Mayor Eugene Sawyer. Sawyer won 94 percent of the black vote. In Houston, in 1991, white businessman Bob Lanier won 70 percent of the Jewish vote and 70 percent of the Latino vote against liberal black state legislator Sylvester Turner, who won 95 percent of the black vote. In New Jersey, in 1993, Republican Christie Todd Whitman won 45 percent of the Latino vote and 40 percent of the Jewish vote in her victory over incumbent Democratic Governor Jim Florio, who won three-quarters of the black vote. In Illinois, in 1994, moderate Republican Governor Jim Edgar garnered a majority of the Jewish vote and a third of the Latino vote in his successful reelection bid against Democratic State Comptroller Dawn Clark Netsch. Netsch won 85 percent of the black vote. This fall, Giuliani may well win over 50 percent of the Jewish and Latino votes against Jewish Democrat Ruth Messinger. Knowledgeable observers predict Messinger will get a large majority of the black vote.

Taken together, these results represent a structural shift in the political alliances that define many of America's largest cities and states. The axiom that Jewish politics are pretty much like African American politics, and that Latino politics are pretty much like African American politics, is widely assumed to be critical not only to each group's identity, but to the continued viability of left-liberal politics. But this axiom is being superseded by a very different political reality. Both Latinos and Jews are proving themselves far more economically conservative than African Americans, and far more conservative on crime. Yet both groups, alienated by the Republican Party's attacks on immigration, cultural diversity and minority rights, are refusing to follow white ethnics into the national GOP in significant numbers. So, although their presidential voting patterns and party registration numbers appear at first to confirm the stereotype of both Jews and Latinos as anchors of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, in fact they are stranded together in a fiscally conservative, culturally cosmopolitan political no-man's-land. And they are a large part of the reason that growing numbers of candidates who are themselves ideologically stranded between the two parties—Whitman, Riordan, Edgar—have in recent years been elected.

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Standard descriptions of Latino political identity go something like this: Latinos are an impoverished community of color who, like African Americans, are heavily invested in a large public sector, and share with them a strong mistrust of the police.

To see why this description doesn't work, try it out on Houston, America's fourth-largest city, and a city in which power is gradually passing from both whites and blacks to Latinos. In 1970, Houston was 12 percent Latino. Today, it is 32 percent Latino. In the 1995 mini-census, Latinos outnumbered African Americans for the first time, and, if trends continue, they will soon outnumber whites. In 1991, Latinos swung Houston's mayoral election by voting overwhelmingly for a moderate white businessman, Bob Lanier, against a liberal black state legislator. A Latina city councilwoman allied with Lanier is currently running to succeed him as mayor. As Latinos become the biggest single players in Houston, how closely will their politics mirror black politics?

Not closely at all, because most of Houston's Latinos don't have the same interests—don't live the same sort of lives—as most of Houston's blacks. In 1995, the unemployment rate for African Americans in Houston was 13 percent. For Latinos, it was 9 percent. African Americans were three times as likely as Latinos to work for the government. Although there were only slightly more Latinos than blacks in the city, Houston had close to twice as many Latino-owned as black-owned businesses. Eighteen percent of Latino households with children were headed by single mothers, compared to 48 percent among blacks. This spring, in the region of Texas encompassing Houston, more than twice as many African Americans as Latinos received welfare benefits.

Furthermore, Latinos, at least in their own perception, suffer less police brutality than African Americans. According to a 1996 survey by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute, a plurality of Latinos in Texas said the police treat Latinos and whites equally, and that police brutality against Latinos is not widespread. In the words of Rodolfo de la Garza, a professor of government at the University of Texas and vice president of the institute, "When's the last time you read a story about a Mexican-American in a fancy car with a white wife (and there are lots of them) getting beaten up by cops in a white neighborhood?"

From different perspectives come different politics. Latinos don't suffer nearly as much from the downsizing of government employment. (To be sure, if a Latino becomes mayor of Houston, Latino representation in public employment will rise—but not by much since most city jobs are covered by civil service laws and do not change with administrations.) Their large numbers of small businessmen create an interest in reduced taxation and regulation. And, since Latinos are more likely to have intact families, they can afford to take a tougher line on welfare. In the Rivera Institute poll, 62 percent of Latinos in Texas opposed increasing benefits for mothers who have additional children while on welfare; 61 percent said people on public assistance were there because "they don't want to work" rather than because "they can't get a job." Is it any surprise that Latinos backed a small-government, law-and-order candidate for mayor? As Sanders Anderson, an African American political scientist at Houston's Texas Southern University, puts it, "The intelligentsia feel there should be an alliance between blacks and Hispanics, but it doesn't usually happen."

As goes Houston, so go most cities and states with large Latino populations. There are exceptions, of course. Houston's Latino population is mostly composed of Mexican-Americans, whereas Puerto Ricans, who live largely on the east coast, are demographically closer to African Americans and politically more likely to ally with them (though many will vote for Giuliani nonetheless). But Puerto Ricans make up only 12 percent of America's Latino population. Mexican-Americans make up 60 percent, and other Latino groups—including Cubans, who have traditionally been affiliated with the GOP but like other Latinos have been deeply alienated by its attacks on immigrant rights—seem similarly uncomfortable with both the politics of the Republican right and the politics of the Rainbow Coalition.

In Chicago—whose Latino population is three-fifths Mexican-American, one-fifth Puerto Rican, one-fifth other—the demographic picture is similar to Houston's. Black unemployment is close to double Latino unemployment. Blacks are three times more likely to be employed by the government. Twenty-three percent of Latino families with children are headed by single mothers, compared to 60 percent of black families. The African American rate of welfare dependency is two and a half times the Latino rate. Latinos not only broke with African Americans over Mayor Richard Daley, voting him into office in 1989 with 80 percent of their votes, compared to 5 percent for blacks, but they have also backed moderate Republican Governor Jim Edgar at more than double the rate of blacks. If immigration and birthrate trends continue, Latinos will outnumber blacks in Chicago by 2005.

But it is in Los Angeles where perhaps the most striking picture of black-Latino political and sociological difference emerges. As elsewhere, Latinos there have shown a greater willingness than blacks to desert liberal candidates. This spring, incumbent Republican Richard Riordan won 60 percent of the Latino vote but 25 percent of the black vote against Democratic challenger Tom Hayden. As elsewhere, Latinos represent a vast source of latent political power. The Latino population of Southern California has grown by 450 percent in the last twenty-five years, and there are now three times as many Latinos in Los Angeles as blacks.

And, as elsewhere, the city's Latino and African American communities have less in common the more closely you look at them. The Latino unemployment rate is 10 percent, and the black unemployment rate is 15 percent. Blacks are four times as likely to be employed by the government. Black families with children are two and a half times more likely to be headed by a single mother. In Los Angeles County, blacks are close to twice

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as likely to receive welfare as Latinos.

But it is not simply that Latino poverty is accompanied by less family breakdown than black poverty. As Gregory Rodriguez, a research fellow at the Pepperdine University Institute for Public Policy and an associate editor at Pacific News Service, shows in his remarkable study "The Emerging Latino Middle Class," the stereotype of entrenched Latino poverty may itself be misleading. Rodriguez explains that, while large numbers of recent immigrants push up overall Latino poverty rates, the picture among U.S.-born Latinos is strikingly different. In Southern California, U.S.-born Latinos are close to four times as likely to be middle class as poor, have rates of home ownership closer to whites and Asians than to blacks, and intermarry at rates nearly three times that of African Americans. Rodriguez argues that, while Latinos in Southern California may not be following the conspicuously successful trajectory of Jewish or Asian immigrants, by the second and third generation they already look more like Italians than like African Americans.

Still, Latino politics are not Italian-American politics. While in local and state elections Latinos sometimes vote like white ethnics, in national races they hew much more closely to the Democratic Party. Last fall, 74 percent of Latinos voted for President Clinton, compared to only 53 percent of Catholics overall. The reason is that Latinos have been deeply alienated by the Republican Party's culturally conservative wing. At first this might seem odd, since Latinos are often pro-life and anti-gay rights. But there is little evidence that these issues make Latinos sympathetic to the Pat Buchanans and Ralph Reeds of the GOP. Rather, Latinos in the past five years have been massively alienated by the cultural right's attack on immigrant rights and by its attack on cultural diversity more generally.

The reason the Republican Party's growing nativism has so deeply turned off Latinos is complex. Polls show that Latinos themselves are ambivalent about immigration, perhaps because newcomers threaten their jobs and the stability of their communities. In fact, several months before the vote on Proposition 187, a *Los Angeles Times* poll showed 50 percent of California Latinos supporting it. But, as the campaign for the proposition progressed, and Latinos were barraged with grainy television commercials of brown-skinned Mexicans crossing the border, they increasingly began to associate Proposition 187 with anti-Latino racism. By Election Day 1994, 70 percent of Latinos opposed the measure, and they turned furiously on politicians who supported it. Pete Wilson's support among Latinos dropped from 35 percent in 1990, before he took up the anti-immigrant crusade, to 22 percent in 1994. A poll of Latino voters by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute found that 63 percent attributed the motivation behind Proposition 187 to racism, compared with only 19 percent who said it was based on "honest concern" about immigration.

It is the ideology and tone of the cultural right—its idealization of a homogeneous America, its hostility to the cultural and ethnic difference that Latinos represent—that have made Latinos nearly as reliable a Democratic constituency in national elections as blacks, even while in local and state elections they often end up on opposite sides. In 1980 and 1984, before the Republican Party veered toward nativism, Ronald Reagan won a third of the Latino vote—three times his percentage among blacks. But, in 1996, Bob Dole's share of the Latino vote dropped to close to half what Reagan got in 1984. A survey by the University of Texas showed that almost half of the Latinos in Texas who voted for George Bush in 1992—in the days before Prop. 187 and the welfare bill's anti-immigrant provisions—deserted Bob Dole in 1996. Even Cubans, long Republican nationally because of their anticommunism, deserted Bob Dole in 1996. As Antonio Gonzalez of the Southwest Voter Research Institute told *The New York Times* after Election Day, "The Republicans once could compete for our vote, but now it's clear that they're facing a powerful and united bloc of opposition from us."

The story of Jewish politics over the past two decades is remarkably similar. In 1980, 1984 and 1988, Republican presidential candidates Ronald Reagan and George Bush won about a third of the Jewish vote. But, in 1992 and 1996, the GOP's share of the Jewish vote for president dropped to less than half that number. To be sure, this stems partly from George Bush's perceived hostility to Israel and Bill Clinton's strong support of the Jewish state. But it is also true that the Republican Party's increased emphasis on the culture war since the end of the cold war has sent Jews, like Latinos, scurrying back into the national Democratic Party.

Much Jewish hostility centers on the Christian Right, which has grown more prominent since the emergence in the early '90s of the Christian Coalition as the Republican Party's premier interest group. A 1995 poll of Jews in the San Francisco area by the local Jewish Community Relations Council, to cite one example, found that 80 percent of the respondents agreed that Christian fundamentalism threatens Jewish security, higher even than the percentage who believed Jewish security was threatened by Louis Farrakhan. A national poll by the American Jewish Committee found 47 percent of Jews believe that many or most members of the religious right are anti-Semitic. Various polls have shown Jews strongly opposed to prayer in public school and vouchers for religious schools.

But, beyond their particular concern over issues of church and state, Jews, like Latinos, see in the Buchanan-Reed wing of the GOP a threat to the American cosmopolitanism on which, as conspicuous minorities, they both rely for acceptance. Jews were the only major white ethnic group to vote against Proposition 187, and a poll by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago found that 60 percent of Jews wanted rates of immigration to increase or remain the same, compared to only 36 percent of blacks and 33 percent of whites. A 1992 poll of New Yorkers for the American Jewish Committee found that 30 percent of blacks and

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40 percent of Italian-Americans agreed that immigrants detracted from overall quality of life, compared to only 15 percent of Jews. Even the National Jewish Coalition, a Republican group, declared in 1996 that it would not support Pat Buchanan if he won the GOP primary. Jewish alienation from the GOP's cultural right wing is a large part of the reason Jews voted much more heavily for Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996 than did other white ethnics.

Observers sometimes cite the 1992 and 1996 Jewish vote as evidence that traditional Jewish liberalism persists, even as Italian-Americans, Irish-Americans and others drift right. But if by liberal we mean supportive of a large, wealth-redistributing public sector—the way African Americans are liberal—Jews no longer deserve the label. Polls by the National Opinion Research Center taken year after year during the 1990s found that blacks were more than twice as likely as Jews to say the government should work to reduce differences in income, and that 62 percent of Jews opposed government redistribution of wealth, compared to 25 percent of blacks and roughly 50 percent of whites. Such fiscal conservatism is simply self-interest for a community that today, unlike a generation ago, is barely represented in public employment, depends relatively little on anti-poverty programs and strongly feels the effects of high marginal tax rates.

The gap between the reality of Jewish political identity and Jewish political identity as it is commonly portrayed is playing itself out dramatically in this year's race for mayor in New York. Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger, a former member of Democratic Socialists of America, is articulate, wonkish and compassionate—an embodiment of Jewish left-liberalism. And, outside of her base on the Upper West Side, she is getting creamed by Republican incumbent Rudy Giuliani—among Jews. Outer borough Jewish politicians, like Congressman Charles Schumer from Brooklyn, Congressman Garry Ackerman from Queens and Congresswoman Nita Lowey, whose district encompasses parts of Westchester County, Queens and the Bronx, have refused to line up behind her, and a staffer for one outer borough member of Congress said simply, "Ruth's going to get killed in our district." Claire Shulman, the Jewish borough president of Queens, is reportedly mulling an endorsement of Giuliani. In middle- and working-class Jewish neighborhoods like Canarsie and Kew Gardens, Messinger's opponents gently remind voters that the Democratic candidate recently told the Jewish newspaper *The Forward* that New York's workfare program was "indentured servitude"—a sentiment well within the Democratic Party's ideological mainstream not long ago—and one that is producing a rich harvest of Giuliani votes.

So is Messinger's opposition to the death penalty. Most Jewish politicians oppose the death penalty, and the conventional assumption is that Jewish voters—being liberal—oppose the death penalty, too. But the assumption is wrong: polls shows that Jews, like non-Jews, support the death penalty overwhelmingly. Jules Polonetsky, an Orthodox Jewish Democratic state assemblyman from Brighton Beach, who is running on Giuliani's ticket for Public Advocate, argues that, particularly since the Crown Heights riot of 1992—which Al D'Amato seized on to take close to half the Jewish vote from Jewish Democrat Bob Abrams in that year's Senate race—crime has been the key issue driving working-class and middle-class Jewish voters from liberal Jewish candidates. "Crown Heights will be the turning point in New York Jewish politics," Polonetsky says. "It's why D'Amato won. D'Amato said that [Abrams was] the kind of Manhattan liberal Jew who was afraid of standing up for Jews. It's the idea of being the kind of liberal Jewish leftist who's willing to be mugged because the mugger had a bad childhood. That's how people see Messinger."

In recent years, countless seminars, conferences, colloquia, articles and books have addressed themselves to black-Jewish relations. Howard University and the American Jewish Committee have founded a magazine devoted solely to the topic. Similarly, politicians and activists of the left have agonized about the conditions for, and state of, a black-Latino alliance. Terms like "Rainbow Coalition" and "people of color" make little sense without one. It is strange, then, that Latino-Jewish relations occasion so little discussion. Strange because, unaided by years of discussion groups and community forums, Jews and Latinos are doing together what neither group is doing with blacks: constructing a vibrant politics based on their commonality of interests.

Had large numbers of Latinos and Jews not broken with African Americans and backed candidates like Rudy Giuliani, Richard Riordan and Christie Todd Whitman, these law-and-order fiscal conservatives could not have won election in traditionally liberal Democratic cities and states, no matter how overwhelming their support from white ethnics. And, although Italian and Irish voters might not mind much, these politicians cannot make overtures to the cultural right because of their need for Jewish and Latino support.

The political space that Jews and Latinos are creating in places like New York, Chicago, New Jersey and California is likely to grow. Jews, although declining in numbers, are a powerful source of campaign money, and the Latino population is increasing fast—Latinos already outnumber African Americans in three of America's four largest cities and will outnumber them in the fourth, Chicago, by early in the next decade. Between 1992 and 1996 alone, the Latino percentage of the electorate increased by 40 percent in California and 60 percent in Texas. And the political space that the Latino-Jewish alliance is creating is important because it is spawning candidates who cannot be assimilated by the two parties, and whose bids for national office could, given the right set of circumstances—if say, Christie Todd Whitman seriously challenged for the Republican presidential nomination—spark a crisis powerful enough to redefine one or both of the major parties. Perhaps one day, maybe in Riverdale and Jackson Heights, they will have conferences about that. •

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THE HARD QUESTIONS

Monumental mess

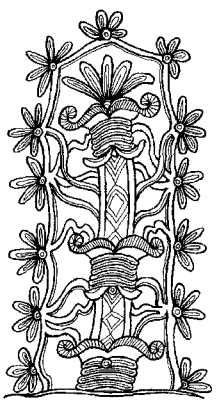
The Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial has opened, and, of course, controversy accompanied it, as it has throughout the forty years from proposal to completion. The fox-fur boa was earlier removed from the statue of Eleanor Roosevelt, because of protests from the defenders of animal rights, to be replaced by a sober cloth coat. To the dismay of conservative columnist George Will, the monument does not depict Roosevelt with his trademark cigarette holder, which would offend modern antitobacco sensibilities. Christopher Hitchens, in *The Nation*, sourly reminded us that the president did not defend the Spanish Republic, or save European refugees. The designers did stand firm against one group's wishes: the lobby of the disabled, who had protested that the monument does not show FDR in a proper wheelchair. (In the monument's statue, FDR is shown seated in a regular chair with small wheels on the legs, wearing a large cloak.)

How wonderful, one thinks today, that democratic America could tolerate and love a president with such an aristocratic accessory as a cigarette holder, and did not need to know the details of his disablement. It took almost forty years to complete the project, with many delays along the way, but FDR has now joined Washington, Lincoln and Jefferson.

More recently another controversy has broken out, this one over the proposed memorial to commemorate World War II. There is strong objection to its proposed site—between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, where critics say it interrupts the connection between the two great monuments to Washington and Lincoln—and strong objection to its design, which, neither quite classical nor quite modern, harkens back to the '30s, when, whether in Washington, Berlin, Moscow or Rome, square columns seemed to be the way to reconcile tradition and modernity.

We do not easily commemorate great men and events today. Perhaps we never did. But while it took us a very long time to complete the Washington Monument, the delays then owed less to ideological conflicts than to such matters as cost, vandalism by the nativist Know Nothings (because of the Pope's presentation of a stone from ancient Rome for the monument) and eventually the Civil War, which interrupted construction. There were no calls for Washington revisionism: no one then looked back to his expense accounts, or his slaves. There was no dispute over how Washington should be commemorated: it was to be without warts. Greatness was then unadulterated. The only reason the monument was not constructed as the architect, Robert Mills, originally planned—as a great obelisk rising from a classical temple—was that the temple portion proved to be too costly. (It seems now like a good thing that only the obelisk was built, with no distracting temple at its feet.)

Nor was there any great argument over the Lincoln Memorial, whether over its design or how Lincoln should be presented. But this halcyon period was not to last. There was fierce controversy over removing cherry trees for the Jefferson Memorial in the 1930s, we learn from an interesting article by Andrea Gabor in *Smithsonian* magazine. According to Gabor, Eleanor Roosevelt protested their removal in an article she wrote for *Reader's Digest*. But the president, acting forcefully as our presidents rarely do on matters of design and commemoration in our capital, pushed ahead with the project, which was completed in record time for an American monument.



By that time, modernism had already raised its head, and the dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Joseph Hudnut, denounced a classical monument to Jefferson. "This monument, when completed, will embody so grotesque a presentation of Jefferson's character as to make him, if such a thing is possible, forever ridiculous." A strange response. What else could be envisaged for the architect of Monticello, the University of Virginia, and the Virginia State Capitol, than a classical structure?

Clearly, two issues that were much less troubling than in the past now bedevil us when it comes to monuments. First is the problem of design, or what has happened to art and architecture. The succession of revivals in architecture has culminated in modernism, which envisages itself as the end of the line, and is hostile to historic reference, to ornament and decoration, and to representations of the human figure. What was I to do, asked Nathan Rapaport, the sculptor of the Warsaw Ghetto monument, "Could I have made a rock with a hole in it and said, 'Voilà! The heroism of the Jewish people?' " No doubt art critics would say yes—better that than human figures in despair or struggle. And today they would prefer even more radical forms of expression. But what kind of monuments can we make with the favored forms of contemporary art—videos, heaps of rubble, animal parts, jejune or subversive slogans?

The second new issue plaguing would-be memorialists is the triumph of debunking—the stripping away of the aura of greatness. Could we manage a Jefferson Memorial today in light of the issues that seem to most engage us about Jefferson? The cherry trees would only be the beginning. There would be the slaves, and Sally Hemmings....

It is not easy to build a noble monument today, to steer between modern art—and what it has done to the means of celebration and commemoration—and modern exposure—and what it has done to heroes and to great events. Yet it can be done—witness the miraculous triumph of the Vietnam Memorial. The controversy over it was more severe, more serious than perhaps over any other monument in Washington. How could it not be, in view of how divided we were, and are, over that conflict? One is amazed that it was completed in a brief three-and-a-half years from its proposal to its opening. Those responsible could give lessons in government.

How did it survive the conflicts over design and meaning? In two ways: it may be a modernist monument, but it is a sober monument that does not simply exalt the artist with some standard trademark—Maya Lin was too young for a trademark, whether the stone with a hole in it or any other. The noble wall may be modernist, but it is as inoffensive as a simple gravestone and as moving, if it is the stone of someone known and loved. Further, the monument is reticent. There is no inscription of any sort, only the names. In view of how we variously feel about the Vietnam War, one word would have been too much.

And the monument to World War II? Here there would be no harm in waiting. It is true it was "the good war," but that does not mean we will be able to decide easily what we will say about it. (Remember the *Enola Gay*.) The Roosevelt Memorial has just opened, and a substantial part of it is devoted to Roosevelt's leadership in World War II. That should be enough for us, at least for a while.

NATHAN GLAZER

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Theater of the Absurd

Opera is one of the pleasanter lunacies of the human race. Through its entire existence, it has been derided almost as much as it has been extolled: "absurd" is one of the kinder epithets repeated and repeated. This is probably logical because, besides the illogic apparent in any performance, it is an art founded on a mistake. The first creators of opera, Italians of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, thought they were recapturing the music-drama of the ancient Greeks. "Unfortunately," says Donald Grout in his history of opera, "they did not know (nor do we) just how this music sounded." We know a bit more about how it was used, but opera went astray there, too.

When film came along three centuries later, the mistake was compounded. If opera had its ridiculous aspects on stage, the camera's closeness emphasized them. Perhaps you're thinking that this applies only to sound films, that no one would have been quite mad enough to make a silent film of opera. Well, there were dozens, many of them meant to be shown with synchronized records, most of them meant to be accompanied by an orchestra or, in smaller places, a lone piano. The best-known of the opera silents was *Der Rosenkavalier*, on which Richard Strauss himself collaborated.

These insanities and many others, all delightful to hopeless opera-imbeciles like myself, are available in a highly enjoyable reference work (oxymoronic though that phrase may sound). *Opera on Screen: A guide to 100 years of films and videos featuring operas, opera singers and operettas* was written by Ken Wlaschin and was published by Beachwood Press (628 pp.; book $75, CD-ROM $55; both together $100). Wlaschin was co-editor, with Philip French, of *The Faber Book of Movie Verse* and has written about film and opera in Britain and America for many years. I didn't expect to agree with all of Wlaschin's opinions (Joseph Losey as "the cinema's equivalent of Henry James," for instance), but neither did I expect the largess of this bountiful book. In big, well-designed two-column pages, it showers information that will fascinate, and oddities that will astonish, anyone interested in its two subjects.

Here are some of the oddities:

- Gina Lollobrigida began her career in opera films, and in one of her early pictures she sang Tosca's "Vissi d'arte," which was released on a record.
- Sophia Loren appeared in the title role of a film of *Aida* (with her singing dubbed by Renata Tebaldi).
- Beginning with René Clair's *Le Million*, at least twenty operas or pieces of opera were composed for films that needed opera scenes. Especially notable: *Christopher Columbus*, a twelve-minute opera by Kurt Weill, book by Ira Gershwin, composed for a Fred MacMurray film, *Where Do We Go From Here?*
- The most famous opera bit composed for a film is certainly the opening aria of *Salammbó*, by Bernard Herrmann, that Mrs. Kane murders in *Citizen Kane*. Less well-known is the fact that Kiri Te Kanawa made a recording of that aria.
- Two operas about Marilyn Monroe have been produced, one written by Lorenzo Ferrero, the other by Ezra Laderman.
- In 1988, Franco Zeffirelli made a film in Italy called *Young Toscanini*. (So far as I know, never shown here.) C. Thomas Howell was the maestro, and Elizabeth Taylor was a diva. "The high point of the film," says Wlaschin, "is Liz Taylor as Aida, which has to be seen to be believed." Not necessarily. I believe it without, please, seeing it.

And here is a film to cuddle the opera public. **Love's Debris** (In Pictures) was made by Werner Schroeter, an experienced director of film and theater and opera all over Europe. The unfortunate title derives from a question by Roland Barthes: Why and how do singers find "emotion" in their voices? Singing is proposed as the debris of personal experience—a dubious answer, but it's good enough for the even more dubious question.

Both the question and the answer are mere excuses for the film, which was shot in and around a thirteenth-century French abbey. Several distinguished singers were invited there, and we listen to them—or with the older ones to their recordings—while they listen along with us. During the singing the camera moves over various beauties of the abbey and its gardens and environs. Possibly this was an attempt at synaesthesia, wedding one art to others, but for me the basic effect of this collage was the very idea of Europe itself: Europe as the provenance and prime mainstay of opera.

Most of the voices we hear are extraor-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Guantanamera. *Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's last work, a gentle spoof of communist bureaucracy, as a family transports a coffin across Cuba to the desired cemetery. Flavorful and funny. (Reviewed 7/28/97)* **Hamsun.** *Jan Troell's thoughtful chronicle of the latter years of the great writer's life—his Nazi years. The screenplay leaves some questions, but Max von Sydow towers in the title role. (5/19/97)* **La Promesse.** *A gem. A 15-year-old boy discovers some truths through the lives of African workers in a Belgian industrial city. Excellent in every way. (5/26/97)* **Ulee's Gold.** *Victor Nunez again explores life in northern Florida. Peter Fonda is quietly strong as a beekeeper beset with criminal harrying. Fonda and the environment are outstanding. (7/7/97)*—**SK**

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dinary. My one real objection to the film is that most of the arias are not heard completely: we usually hear complete sections. (Exception: the Russian tenor Sergueuï Larin does all of Florestan's tremendous aria that opens Act Two of *Fidelio*, and does it heroically.) I suppose that Schroeter handles the music this way, as with the visual wanderings, to keep the film from being a concert bill. Still, to hear Martha Mödl do only the "Komm, Hoffnung" section of Leonore's great aria in Act One of *Fidelio* is a boon. Further, it's a recording of the younger Mödl that we and the older Mödl hear together, which makes the experience even more moving—technology deepening our sense of mortality.

For me, the dazzling discovery in the film is Anita Cerquetti, of whom I had never heard. This dramatic soprano, born in 1931 and now looking like a benevolent Medusa, retired after a career of only about a dozen years. She quit for personal reasons while her voice was at its height, as we can hear from her recordings. With her, we listen to her record of the opening lyrical section of Norma's "Casta diva," which foolishly I almost resented. It challenges what is the greatest single operatic recording I know, Rosa Ponselle's "Casta diva." Cerquetti is magnificent.

She is interviewed here by the French actress Carole Bouquet (and Cerquetti also gives a lesson to a younger singer). Mödl is interviewed by Isabelle Huppert, with a translator. Mödl knows that Huppert sings and listens to her try something, then gives her advice. Huppert is, in fact, not dreadful.

Throughout, during the wanderings between arias in gardens and ancient rooms, with some of these singers and with other opera people, there is much talk of life and death and love. Ignorable. *Love's Debris* is welcome for its two-hour sojourn in a realm where opera, that arrant madness, is the only sanity. •

Robert Brustein on Theater

The Heritage of MXAT

In June, the Moscow Art Theatre organized an international conference to celebrate its approaching Jubilee. MXAT (pronounced "Mahat"), as the Moscow Art Theatre is locally called, opened its doors officially in October of 1898. But it was a year earlier, on June 22, 1897, that the founding directors, Konstantin Stanislavsky and Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, first sat down at a table in a Moscow restaurant called Slavyansky Bazaar to plan a new theatrical institution for Russia. It was to be an art theater with a program that would do away with the reigning artificiality, conventionality and contrivance; revolutionize scene design; and bring a new standard of naturalistic acting to the world stage.

The three-day affair commemorating this historic meeting included banquets, student presentations, informal gatherings, satirical cabarets, visits to the graves of the founders and a tour of Stanislavsky's rather seedy Lyubimovka estate (the inspiration for Chekhov's cherry orchard) in a nearby suburb. But the pivotal event was the Slavyansky Bazaar conference on Sunday, preceded by a performance of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* on Saturday night. Both occasions took place on the vast reaches of the Moscow Art Theatre stage.

For the conference, this steeply raked stage was simply furnished with two chairs and a table, simulating the restaurant site where the two men had held their first meeting. Huge photographs of the founders stared down at the participants, who included over 800 directors and actors from all over Russia and the former Soviet states. Some of the more well-known invitees from abroad—among them Peter Brook, Ingmar Bergman, Robert Wilson and Meryl Streep—had failed to show. But there were still a significant number of foreign guests in attendance, including Declan Donellan of Great Britain, Franco Quadri of Italy, François Rochaix of Switzerland and Tadashi Suzuki of Japan.

I was invited as an American representative. It was my first visit to Russia, and I was filled with wonder and regret. What particularly piqued my envy was the healthiness of Russian theater compared with the underfunded theaters of my own country. Although institutions such as MXAT still receive large government subsidies, Russian theater is in the process of being partially privatized. It remains to be seen how well it will continue to flourish in this brutally capitalist society, where the garish features of McDonald's restaurants now share the landscape with the onions of Byzantine churches, and the Russian Mafia takes a substantial cut, on pain of death, from the profits of every striving businessman.

And yet the theater still commands large enthusiastic audiences from a population that considers both the solitary arts—literature and poetry—and the performing arts—theater, dance and music—to be indispensable features of public life. This passion for culture is further reflected in the way Moscow's avenues and squares are increasingly being renamed for Russian artists. Pushkin, Gorki, Chekhov, Tolstoi, Mayakovsky and other literati appear as often on street signs as politicians, generals and martyrs, and many of their Moscow apartments have been turned into shrines.

I'm not exactly sure what the conference accomplished, except to canonize the founders of MXAT. The whole complicated affair had been carefully engineered by the theater's brilliant and personable literary director, Anatoly Smeliansky—an expert, ironically enough, on Mikhail Bulgakov, one of Stanislavsky's most unforgiving critics. Bulgakov, in his novel *Black Snow*, satirized Stanislavsky as an egotistical ogre who tyrannized young dramatists, especially if they had the temerity to include gunshot sounds in their plays. (The aging director preferred his stage deaths to come by sword or bow and arrow.)

Still, in Smeliansky's hands, the conference generally avoided any direct criticism of the author of *My Life in Art*. Indeed, both founders were blessed with a telegraphed endorsement from Boris Yeltsin and the significant presence of the Cultural Minister with his two vice ministers. They also enjoyed considerable reverence from a majority of the conferees, even though the two founding directors had ended up as bitter enemies who refused to talk to each other for sixteen years. (This division recently found a modern parallel when the MXAT split into two separate institutions—the Chekhov Theatre and the Gorki Theatre, otherwise known as "his" and "hers.")

The chorus of praise for Stanislavsky and the ecumenical atmosphere of the proceedings were somewhat surprising, considering how many present had broken off into radically different theatrical directions. Yet occasionally the conference managed to arouse some of the old rivalries. At the very beginning, Yuri Lyubimov, former director of the Taganka Theatre, rudely interrupted Yefremov, the current artistic director of MXAT, in mid-sentence, before he had a chance to complete his introductory remarks. Lyubimov, a great bear of a man with a shock of white hair, lum-

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bered threateningly to his feet, like one of the apparatchiks who had made him flee Russia, and demanded a moment of silence from the conference "in the name of the fallen." Lyubimov is a former political dissident who followed the techniques of another defector from Stanislavsky, the futurist and surrealist director V.E. Meyerhold. Here he was asking recognition of the fact that on this very date the Nazis had begun their war with the Soviet Union. Deftly sidestepping another potential conflict, Yefremov graciously yielded to Lyubimov's request, though the silent moment had already been scheduled for later in the day, closer to the exact time of the outbreak of hostilities.

Following this interruption, the five-and-a-half-hour conference proceeded more routinely with a number of speeches, which Lyubimov, holding a bottle in his hands and glowering at the stage, sometimes greeted with audible rumbles of disagreement. (His own speech included the curious complaint that he had to go abroad to hear Dostoevsky's name mentioned with respect.) The procedure involved about ten minutes of commentary from each participant, after which he or she was asked to turn to the empty chairs and pose a question to the two absent founders. My own query, after I had made some remarks about how the American version of the Stanislavsky system (the "Method") created many more movie stars than theater artists, was directed to the ghost of Stanislavsky. I asked him how much responsibility he was willing to take for Lee Strasberg.

The question would have been rhetorical even had Stanislavsky been alive to answer it. After visiting Stanislavsky in Paris in the '30s, Stella Adler had already reported on the Master's disapproval of Strasberg's use of "private moments" and "emotional memories" as unwarranted intrusions into the actor's psyche. But more significant than Strasberg's technical deviations from the Stanislavsky system was his indifference to Stanislavsky's ethical purpose. Stanislavsky had famously demanded of his company that they love the art in themselves rather than themselves in the art, which was his way of urging them to be dedicated actors instead of egocentric careerists. By contrast, one of Lee Strasberg's leading examples of a great American actress was Marilyn Monroe.

The best witnesses at the conference to the preservation of the Stanislavsky ethic in Russian theater were the actresses. One of them, the 91-year-old Angelina Stepanova, testified to her love of theater and her anguish at having grown too old to project over the footlights. Suggesting that some theatrical fashions are universal, she also lamented the current Russian tendency to celebrate ethnic differences rather than to use the theater as a locus of mutual understanding. Alla Demidova of the Taganka, a veteran of thirty years' devotion to the stage, spoke of the "beauty of still force" and the need to restore the old masterpieces, since tradition is the enemy of the new.

One of the most eloquent of the speakers was the Irish director Declan Donellan. He scorned the stereotype of actors as people who like to show off, who compulsively seek attention, preferring to call them "sophisticated lawgivers." Donellan, who is highly selective about the countries in which he directs, said he had come to hate the "banal" cleverness of directors, including himself, longing instead for those moments when actors bring life to the stage, when you "collapse at a sense of the truth." "To preserve the freedom of the actor," he concluded, "we sometimes have to impose laws—and then admit they are failures, because all laws are the symptom of the breakdown of love."

For all this spirited discussion of actors and directors, it was disconcerting how little talk there was of playwrights, and how few had been invited to the conference. This was particularly odd, considering that it is the image of a seagull—symbolizing Stanislavsky's stunning reincarnation of Chekhov's play, a failure when it was earlier produced—that still adorns the curtain and the façade of MXAT. Chekhov's quarrels with Stanislavsky over the misinterpretation of his work ("he turns my characters into crybabies") are legendary. So I thought I was in something of a time warp when Oleg Yefremov told me, during one of the banquets, that Chekhov really didn't understand his own plays, and that when he tried to direct a scene himself, he failed miserably. Obviously the old tensions between the "author of the play" and the "author of the production" still prevail, as they did in the early days of MXAT. Stanislavsky and Chekhov are buried in the same Moscow graveyard (called "The Cherry Orchard"). But the director's grandiose stone monument virtually dwarfs the playwright's tiny marker.

Still, I had the sense that the spirit of Chekhov was hovering, still unsatisfied, over the heads of the conferees. Appropriately, it was Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* that was the artistic centerpiece of the weekend. Despite his unhappiness with Stanislavsky, I think the playwright would have been well-satisfied with Yefremov's current version, which is new to the repertory. It is a production that takes some liberties with the play, yet leaves it thoroughly refreshed. Since Yefremov suffers from a debilitating form of emphysema (like many Russians, he is a very heavy smoker), the director was ill during some of the rehearsals, so some of the production seemed unfinished. But I came away from this *Three Sisters* with a renewed appreciation of Chekhov's singular fin-de-siècle vision.

Although only Act IV is actually an exterior setting, Yefremov began each of the other acts in front of the Prozorov family home. In Act I, for example, the sisters are returning home from a visit to their father's grave. This provincial homestead is a haunting piece of architecture that sits on stage like an island surrounded by three huge gorgeously lighted drops of birch trees before a revolve brings us inside for the beginning of each action. All of the acting is extremely detailed, and every character has been newly interpreted. Natasha, usually played as an insensitive parvenu, is here a good-natured, highly sexed, blowsy blonde (Natalya Yegorova) whose adulterous relationship with Protopopov is partly caused by the indifference of her husband. At the beginning of the second act, she mounts Andrei as he is working in the drawing room. He sits passive as a stone with his back to the audience, while she, chattering away, achieves sexual satisfaction without any participation whatever from her partner.

The actresses playing the sisters (Olga Barnet as Olga, Yelena Mayorova as Masha, Polina Medvedeva as Irina) are also fully dimensioned. Their shared sense of having been passed over by life is influenced both by external circumstances and their own lack of nerve. Indeed, there is deeply textured playing by the entire cast. As a result, I've never seen the fourth act, of deaths and farewells, more wrenchingly performed. Tusenbach, preparing for his duel with Solyony, bids a merry goodbye to Irina, walks to the back of the deep MXAT stage, then turns and shouts her name in a manner that resounds like the gunshot that is soon to take his life. Masha, saying farewell to her departing lover Vershinin, gives him a brave, perfunctory peck on the cheek, brushes past him, then falls grief-stricken to the floor. Hearing the play performed in its native language made me aware for the first time how often the word *nichevo* (Russian for both "nothing" and "there, there") reverberates through the dialogue, how often Chekhovian comfort alternates with Chekhovian despair.

The first time I saw MXAT do *The Three Sisters* was in 1965, during its last visit to New York. Then, the company seemed

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a little dusty, a little haloed by the past. For what might have been ideological reasons—the need to leave a positive message—Tchebutykin's despairing response ("It doesn't matter") to the awful events of the last act had been excised, though it was intended as a nihilistic counterpoint to the sisters' final paean of hope. Yefremov cut it, too, not to placate a political regime but to achieve a stunning theatrical effect. The entire Prozorov house moves to the backstage wall. The birch trees descend to form a looming enclosure. And the sisters wander in aimless circles before coming together in a final embrace within the vast expanse of nature.

MXAT is experimental without being avant-garde, daring without being cutting edge. Under Yefremov's direction for the past twenty-seven years, it has managed to bridge radical changes in political and theatrical fashions. It is hardly the most adventurous theater in Russia. That distinction surely belongs to the Maly Theatre of St. Petersburg. But at present it is preserving the rich heritage of the theater not just through ceremonial tributes to its founders, but also through powerful and penetrating works of art. •

Jed Perl on Art

A Serpent, A Smile, A Prayer

The magisterial exhibition of ancient Cambodian sculpture that is currently at the National Gallery in Washington begins with a many-headed serpent baring seven pairs of teeth and ends with a beautiful youth kneeling in prayer. What may strike a museumgoer about these images of fury and quietude is their alien power: the serpent dates from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the worshiper from the fifteenth or sixteenth century. On reflection, though, the hail-and-farewell placement of such singularly contrasting statues will kick off thoughts of modern-day Cambodia, a country that many have hoped was at last emerging from decades as murderous as any in the annals of mankind. "Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia: Millennium of Glory" is presented in darkly colored, subtly lit galleries; it has the dramatic impact of a look into the past that forces us to see the present a little differently. But few at the National Gallery could have imagined how dramatically the meanings of the glowering monsters and enigmatically smiling gods who fill room after room at the museum would resonate, for the simple reason that only somebody with a close knowledge of the Cambodian scene could even suspect how rapidly the situation in Phnom Penh was going to darken in the weeks since the exhibition opened.

The serpent sculpture, called a *naga*, is of a variety that is often placed at the entrance of Cambodian temples to signal the passage from the secular world to a sacred place. When the exhibition went up in Washington at the end of June, this many-headed monster felt like a wonderful felicitous touch, because the show was (among other things) a sign that Cambodia was putting behind itself the nightmare of the years between 1975 and 1978, when more than a million people (probably well over one-seventh of the country's population) died at the hands of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. The new coalition government, elected in U.N.-sponsored elections in 1993 with a huge voter turnout, was, to say the least, not without its problems. Hun Sen, whose Cambodian People's Party (formerly the Communist Party) lost the election, was brought into the government as co-prime minister with Prince Norodom Ranariddh because he had the military clout to invalidate the election by force. Still, in the last few years there has been some economic improvement and the beginning of a startlingly independent press. (And the recent news that the Khmer Rouge had taken Pol Pot prisoner stirred some hope that he might stand trial before an international tribunal.) A part of the reason that the Cambodians sent out this grand horde of sculpture, much of it originally from the great Angkor complex of temples and palaces, was to reinforce a cautious international optimism about Cambodia, and to give back something to countries that have been helping Cambodia get back on its feet. The show was first seen in Paris (which contributed more than a third of the works, from the Musée Guimet), and it is scheduled to go on to Japan.

When these ancient Cambodian gods arrived at the National Gallery, they were ambassadors of a very rickety but still promising young democracy, a country that the praying youth at the close of the show assured us could only gain in strength. For Americans, the dozens of smiling deities who filled the galleries might seem like a vision of hope emerging from a maelstrom that we had had a hand in creating, especially in 1973, when U.S. planes carpet bombed the country. But now, only a few short weeks after the opening, all the meanings are scrambled, if not reversed. Cambodia's coalition government is no more. Hun Sen, who has seized sole control, is rounding up and executing Prince Ranariddh's supporters; and the prince tours the world, begging for help. The *naga*'s defense of the sacred over the profane suddenly seems all pose, almost comic. The smiles of the gods have turned troublingly enigmatic: you're aware of what they won't reveal. And the praying youth isn't sweetly optimistic but mutely despairing, eternally resigned.

International loan shows, especially ones such as "Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia," which involve the transport of a significant proportion of a country's artistic patrimony, can be criticized on a number of counts. Shipping masterworks around the world probably involves far greater risks than most museum people are willing to admit, and the resulting exhibitions, though they are very often attendance grabbers, can force unfamiliar images into an environment so alien that only a fraction of their true character comes to the fore. These issues are not irrelevant to the Cambodia show, but unlike so many endeavors of this kind, which are the products of executive decisions by tourist boards and corporate sponsors, this one has an almost frightening urgency. Art that was created 700 or 800 years ago probably has no direct bearing on current events, but at least there is the possibility that museumgoers who have been touched by the greatest achievements of Cambodian civilization will give some more thought to what the Cambodians are suffering now.

Actually, Cambodian art and architecture have played a part in East-West relations for more than 100 years. It was in the 1860s that Ernest Doudart de Lagrée, the French representative in Cambodia, along with the artist Louis Delaporte and others, began bringing back to France information about the vast Angkor complex. (Although building at Angkor began in the ninth century, the structures that are best-known today date from the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.) In the years around 1900, the stylized-mountain profiles of

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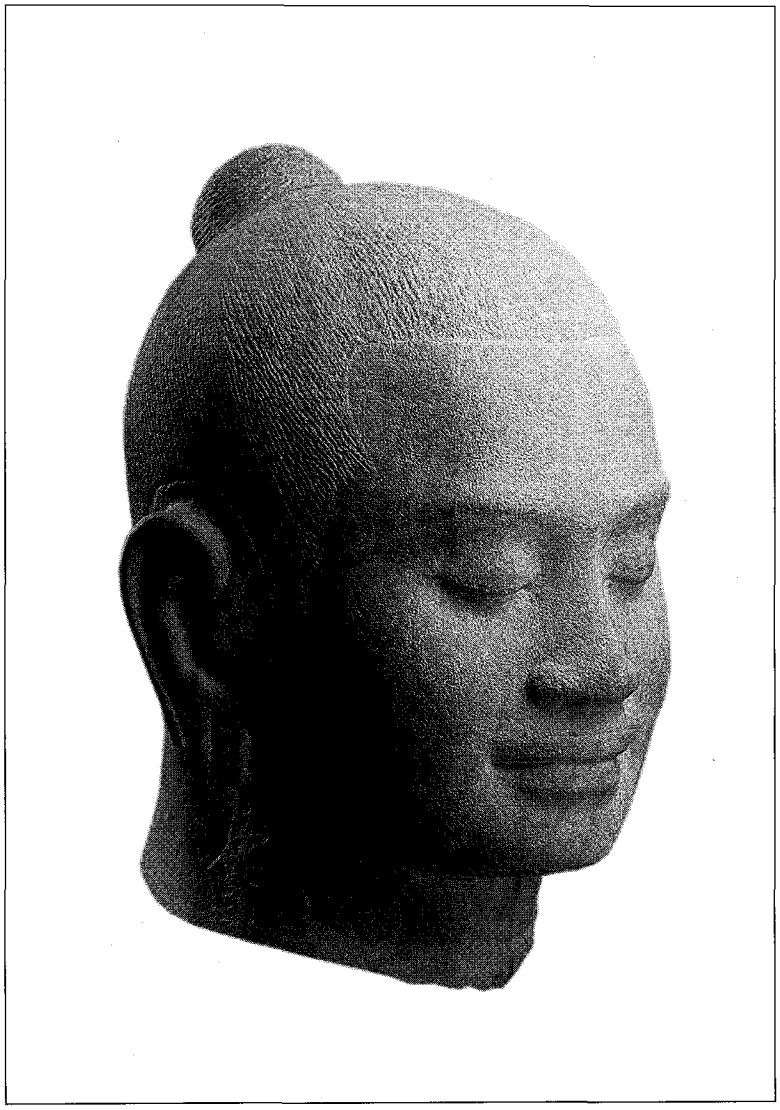
Khmer architecture, with their epochal bas-reliefs and huge faces smiling down from gates and towers, came to define an alien idea of beauty. Bruno Dagens's richly illustrated study of the Western fascination with Cambodian art, *Angkor: Heart of an Asian Empire* (Abrams), reproduces the huge reconstructions of Angkor Wat that dominated the French Colonial Expositions of 1922 and 1931. Dagens also shows the lines of luxury cars carrying wealthy tourists from Saigon and Bangkok to the ruins in the '30s, and how the image of Angkor Wat was used as a backdrop for ads selling everything from refrigerators to guns.

There was more than the pop-chic appeal of exoticism to this early twentieth-century fascination with the Cambodian classics. In Southeast Asia, where the heaped-on-high elaboration of the architecture was contrasted with the pared-down lyricism of the sculptures of the gods, Europeans discovered something like the polar opposite of the classical Greek idea, which was to use the stripped-down power of the architecture as a striking backdrop for all the animation and the complication of an increasingly naturalistic figurative art. Cambodian sculpture had its own kind of serpentine allure. You feel its effect in the drawings that Rodin did of the Royal Cambodian dancers who visited France in 1906. The dancers, whose style was quite evidently descended from the poses of the figures on the reliefs at Angkor Wat, actually performed at Rodin's house in Meudon. In the wash drawings that this last of the Romantic sculptors produced, Rodin is pushing beyond the alienness of first impressions; he's allowing his hand to be propelled by the surprising, off-kilter angles and curves of the Cambodian arabesque.

Through their systematic study of Cambodian sites, French archaeologists and students of Sanskrit began to understand the full extent of the Khmer achievement. The Angkor Kingdom was begun by Jayavarman II in 802. He declared himself a *devaraja*, a god-king, and thereby inaugurated a line of rulers who associated themselves with Siva, king of the Hindu gods. The majority of what is today most familiar in the Angkor complex (which covers some forty square miles) was created by Suryavarman II, who built Angkor Wat, and Jayavarman VII, who was responsible for the city of Angkor Thom, which encloses the Bayon, the temple with the smiling faces.



National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh

HEAD OF JAYAVARMAN VII, ANGKOR PERIOD, STYLE OF THE BAYON, LATE TWELFTH - EARLY THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Both Angkor Wat and the Bayon recapitulate the shape of the sacred Mount Meru, with its five peaks, which is the center of the Hindu universe and home of the gods. Surrounded by vast reservoirs (called *barays*) and reaching high into the sky, these man-made mountains, with their congeries of stairs and portals and arcades, immediately impress us as vast allegorical expressions of a primal relationship between earth, water and air. Kamaleswar Bhattacharya, in an essay for the National Gallery catalog, observes that Cambodian religion is often "monistic, in the sense that it recognizes no duality between God and the world, the world being the manifestation of God." And you immediately feel that these temples are the entire world. The Cambodians gave the faraway land of the gods a concrete, here-and-now form.

Such a monumentally ambitious art might not be expected to convey any elusive shades of feeling, but in ancient Cambodia subtlety and grandeur were not irreconcilable. In a room at the very center of the exhibition there is a huge, serenely smiling bronze head of the god Vishnu that has a surprisingly intimate allure. Together with the shoulders and two of the original four arms, this immense head (about a yard high) is all that remains of a vast reclining figure that once dominated an island in one of the *barays* at Angkor. The bronze was only unearthed in 1936, but we have a description of it from the late thirteenth century, when the Chinese envoy Zhou Daguan, who quite understandably mistook this paradisaical figure for a Buddha, saw what is in fact Vishnu reclining in cosmic sleep on the serpent Ananta, set in one of the *barays*, with water flowing from his navel. Vishnu is seen in the midst of the creation of the world; out of the lotus in his navel will emerge Brahma, or, in another version of the story, Brahma, Siva and Vishnu himself. This is a religion that, like the art it inspired, is full of repetitions and echoes and trajectories that manage to return to where they began.

From a distance this Vishnu has a dazzling theatrical impact, even though the surface is much abraded and what were probably inlays of precious metals are gone. And as I move closer my impression of the God only becomes richer, more nuanced. Vishnu's head is at an angle; he gazes off, above and beyond us, into the distance. He is completely self-absorbed, but the effect isn't chilling. Quite the reverse, we are fascinated to be catching the divinity off-

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guard, in a private reverie that it is beyond our power to disturb. The size of the head obviously underscores the fact that Vishnu is different from us, but it also has the effect, something like that of a gigantic close-up in a movie, of creating a mysterious rapport. The scale has a way of amplifying the smile that plays across his face. Despite the badly damaged surface, the features are lucidly readable; we feel that we're seeing the God clearly. Vishnu has all the elegant enchantment and otherworldly delicacy of a dreamer in a painting by Watteau. But if Watteau's mysterious figures can only hope for their own happiness, Vishnu's dreams are for the whole world. This Cambodian masterwork carries Watteau's kind of flickering fantasy-shadings into the scale of cosmic myth.

The Khmer smile, which animates Vishnu's face, greets visitors almost everywhere they turn at the National Gallery. That smile appears in bronze and in sandstone, on Vishnus, Brahmas, Sivas, Buddhas and any number of other gods and goddesses and dancers and demons. Less tentative than the smile of the *kouros* figures of sixth-century Greece, less personal than the expression of the Madonna in the great stained glass window at Chartres, it is a veiled smile—a glimpse of a mystery. Nowadays we tend to associate this smile with the deep inward contentment of Buddhism, a religion that has its origins in the spiritual odyssey of a Nepalese prince, Siddharta Gautama, who probably died in 483 B.C. But Buddhism was not the official court religion at Angkor until the late twelfth century, and the smiles on many of the faces from Angkor are not those of mortals who achieved bliss, but of gods who control man's fate and hold the secrets of the universe.

At Angkor, where the mix of Hindu and Buddhist influences is exceedingly complex, the smiles of the gods often achieve a fascinating intermingling of Buddha's sublime serenity and Vishnu's awe-inspiring knowledge. This smile is apotheosized in the imposing faces that dominate the towers of the Bayon. Pierre Loti, in his book *An Angkor Pilgrim*, recorded in 1912 how the expressions on those faces seemed to change with the weather and the time of day, going from ironic benevolence to peacefulness to pity. There is knowledge behind that smile, and, for those of us who do not have that knowledge, there can be unease, too.

Angkor is a part of the popular imagination, so much so that museumgoers may find that some of these statues

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Salander-O'Reilly Galleries 20 East 79th Street, NYC, 10021, 212-879-6606. Monday through Friday, 9:30-5:30. *Irwin Hollander: Paintings*. Our inaugural exhibition of Hollander's paintings at the gallery will showcase 36 works in acrylic over lithography on paper and panel. August 5 - 29.
Barnaby Fitzgerald: Paintings. Also an inaugural exhibition, 18 new, figurative works in oil on canvas. August 5 - 29.
Paul Weingarten: Paintings. 20 new urban, industrial landscapes in oil on canvas. August 5 - 29.

Antique Navajo and Mexican Textiles Andrew Nagen Gallery. P.O. Box 1306, Corrales, NM 87048, 505-898-5058. By appointment, please. Since 1976 we have specialized in the sale, purchase and appraisal of classic, transitional and regional textiles from all the Southwestern Native American and Hispanic cultures. We supply or request photos for purchase, sale or approval. No catalog.

Beacon Hill Fine Art 980 Madison Avenue, NYC, 10021, 212-734-3636, Summer hours: Monday through Friday 10-6; After Labor Day: Tuesday through Saturday 10-6, Monday by appointment. *The Vibrant Landscape: With a Selection of Pastels by Allen Tucker*. An exhibition of 19th and early 20th-century American paintings. Works by George Inness, Alfred Thompson Bricher, George Henry Smillie, Martin Johnson Heade, Junius Sloan, Norton Bush, Walter Clark, Edmund Greacen, James McDougal Hart, and many others. Thirty pastels by Allen Tucker will accompany the main gallery exhibition. Tucker established himself as an Impressionist but turned to Expressionism during the 1910s. The circa WWI works are highly expressive and reflect Tucker's admiration for Vincent Van Gogh. Please call for information and photographs. July 21 - September 6.

Center for Creative Photography The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, 520-621-7968. Monday through Friday, 11-5; Sunday, 12-5. *Sandra Semchuk: how far back is home....* The exhibition surveys over two decades of this Canadian artist's work, exploring her recurrent themes of ethnic, nationalistic, and gender identity through poignant explorations of self, family and community. Through September 14.

Swann Galleries 104 East 25th Street, NYC, 212-254-4710. Monday through Friday, 10-6; previews Saturdays prior to auctions, 10-4. AUCTION: August 6: *Posters, featuring American Railway Express from the 1920s*. Please write or call for preview hours, quarterly newsletter with full auction schedule, and to purchase catalogs. Now accepting consignments for late autumn and winter auctions.

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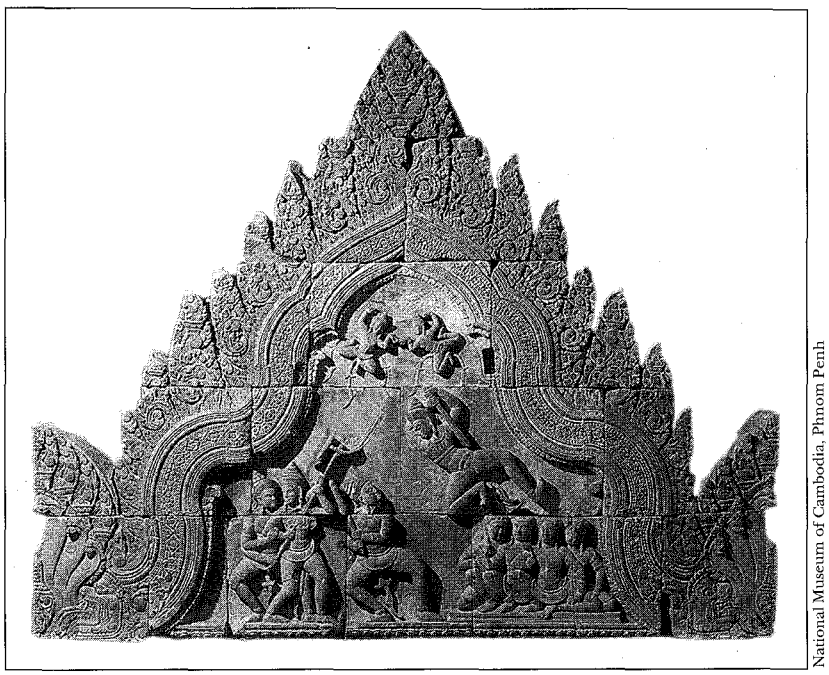
carved half a world away are more immediately appealing to them than many a Madonna by Raphael. By now a vaguely Eastern idea of spirituality may be more familiar to a wide swathe of Americans than the stories in the New Testament. And it's also true that modern art, by declaring its distance from the High Renaissance, has prepared us for Asia, whose artists of course taught modern Europeans a thing or two. Gauguin, one of the most accessible of late-nineteenth-century radicals, drew inspiration from photographs of the Javanese sculpture of Borobudur, in Indonesia; and from Borobudur to Angkor Wat isn't so far. No wonder that the American museum-goer who knows Gauguin's Tahitian idylls and Hesse's *Siddhartha* can strike up such an easy acquaintance with the Hindu gods of Cambodia, whose frequently serene demeanor suggests a deep Buddhist coloration. There's a formality to the strict, face-forward symmetry of these gods that can feel foreign, but their smiling aplomb strikes a chord in the contemporary audience, which may be all too quick to mistake this contemplative pose for some kind of post-Freudian bliss.

Helen Ibbitson Jessup, the guest curator who has organized the show for the National Gallery, has worked with the designer Mark Leithauser to create a daringly effective installation. (The other curators are Thierry Zéphir, associated with the Musée Guimet, and Ang Chouléan, an assistant to the Cambodian Minister of State in Charge of the Cultural Patrimony.) Jessup has wisely set freestanding statues in front of reliefs, so that the installation begins to suggest the enveloping experience of seeing Southeast Asian art in its original context. I do not generally care for dark walls and dramatic lighting in museums; the cast shadows may obliterate too much detail. This is sometimes a problem here. Yet finally I prefer this rather souped-up presentation to the chillier, more museologically correct installation that I recall at the show of Indonesian sculpture at the National Gallery seven years ago. In the later rooms of the Cambodia show there are even some large blow-ups of engravings after Delaporte's drawings of the temples as they looked in the nineteenth century, and of photographs by Kenro Izu of the monuments as they are today, with trees coiled monstrously around the carvings. Some will say that these engravings and photographs have no place here. Yet there's something to be said for giving some heat to the presentation; these stirringly romantic images remind us of the tropical context, and of how marvelous these vast monuments look when seen from a considerable distance or a surprisingly close vantage point.

Not everything at the National Gallery derives from the Angkor complex, but Angkor is the fulcrum, the place where, over a period of decades and centuries, Cambodian artists absorbed the lessons of Indian art and went on to create an awesome serenity of their own. Cambodian art and architecture, like that of Indonesia to the south, flows out of and responds to the gigantic achievement of Indian art, which is so much a matter of repetitions and elaborations, of complicated arabesques repeated and adumbrated until they achieve an uncoiling power. Whereas in the Graeco-Roman tradition carved forms are generally regarded as a way to accent relatively uninflected surfaces, in India and Southeast Asia the monumental impact of the architecture is generated out of the overflow of detail. Some would say that it is not in India itself, but rather in the great monuments of Borobudur and Angkor Wat that this idea is most perfectly expressed. I haven't seen the red sandstone towers of Angkor, but I have been to Borobudur, and that astonishing experience leaves me willing to believe Helen Jessup when she remarks that while "some of the fabled wonders of the world fail to equal their reputation; Angkor blows its legend away, rendering it a pale shadow of the reality."



National Museum of Cambodia, Phnom Penh

PEDIMENT, ANGKOR PERIOD, STYLE OF BANTEAY SREI, C. 967

Of course, you can't have that experience in Washington. But you can glimpse Cambodia's architectural miracle in two large pediments from Banteay Srei, a relatively small temple that is located north of Angkor proper. Banteay Srei, which was built by Brahmin priests, was never connected with the cult of the king. With its intimate elegance, it has the special charm of a somewhat private monument created in an overwhelmingly public age—rather like Bernini's Saint Teresa in Rome.

It was to Banteay Srei, one of the jewels of Cambodian art, that André Malraux traveled in 1923, with the object of stealing a number of carvings, which he hoped to take back to France. Malraux, his wife Clara and a friend were caught red-handed in Phnom Penh. They were arrested and charged with trafficking in antiques. Malraux and his friend were tried and given prison sentences, but Clara managed to return to Paris and rallied Malraux's literary friends, who obtained his release. Not one to be embarrassed by his own nefarious deeds, Malraux put much of the experience into *The Royal Way*, his novel of 1930. He has the dubious honor of being the most distinguished man to be involved in the theft of ancient Cambodian art, but he's far from the only one, and the plundering has certainly not lessened in succeeding decades. You can understand why Cambodians hacked away at the temples in the grim years of Pol Pot's ascendancy, when a head from Angkor might be traded for a bowl of rice; but the adventurers and the archaeologists who have robbed historic sites, not to mention the dealers and the collectors who receive such material, are another matter entirely.

The two Banteay Srei pediments that are in the National Gallery show were removed from the temple site only after it proved impossible to reconstruct the portals on which they sat. One of them is now in the collection of the museum in Phnom Penh, the other in the Musée Guimet in Paris. The sandstone panels, each roughly four feet high, are essen-

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tially triangular, but with an elaborately carved border that gives the shape an undulating, flamelike complexity. Within these frames, which are masterpieces of a rococo fantasy that is emphasized by the rich, pinkish glow of the stone, unfold stories from the *Mahabharata*, the massive Indian epic that strikes foreigners with its dizzying narrative intricacy.

In both panels, an atmosphere of ceremonial grace that pervades even violent moments is announced by pairs of small flying deities just beneath the peak of the triangle. Their flung-out arms and legs suggest a flower-like shape that harmonizes with the blossoming-and-flickering spirit of the frame. There are echoes of this same kind of bursting-outward form in the leaping warrior Bhima in one panel and, to a lesser degree, in the demons Sunda and Upasunda in the other. You feel the pressure of conflict in these panels, yet it registers as a dance-like experience rather than a theatrical one. The sculptor has chosen to reveal his meaning not through the particularities of a dramatic confrontation, but through the coursing animation, the swirling fervor. To grasp the effect of a great Cambodian temple, you must imagine these effects multiplied—a hundred fold at Banteay Srei, a thousand fold (if not a million fold) at Angkor Wat.

The result of all this multiplication is what Heinrich Zimmer, in his *Art of Indian Asia*, called a "wondrous life-abundance." The dynamic principle of Cambodian art is this decorative flood, which sweeps up fantastical curlicues, luxuriant plants, sleek animals, elegant dancers and, in one of the most famous panels at Angkor Wat, a vast panorama of Vishnu Churning the Sea in the days during which the world came into being. When integrated into architecture, these deeply carved reliefs, some of which may look a bit crude when seen close-up in a museum, take on a rich, allusive coloration, a shimmering play of light and dark.

There is something inexorable about this decorative flow, and a part of the appeal of the frequently symmetrical and near-immobile statues of the gods is in the counterpoint that they provide. They give us an interval of rest—a quiet inlet at the edge of the whirling rapids. The Cambodian gods often have a sensuousness that is subtler and more discreet than that of the Indian deities. These Khmer immortals absorb all the tensions that surround them; their stillness has a weight. That is certainly the impact of many of the most hieratic, almost stolid-looking work in the show; I'm thinking especially of some of the Preah Ko style statues, from the ninth century. These imposing figures may not impress a museumgoer quite as much as a number of the more refined images that appear later on, but you can't deny that statues such as the Siva and Vishnu from the late ninth century have a centered elemental power.

Khmer sculptors regard the human form not as a complicated mechanism, but as a singularity, a totality. What matters is the enclosing silhouette; and so the articulation of the musculature is kept to a bare minimum. In the greatest of the statues, it is the sustained line of that silhouette, like a ribbon running through space, that defines and reins in the fullness of the form. The body's outward-pressing impact is present yet somehow veiled. The vehemence of muscular movement is gently enclosed. The two intertwined torsos of the *Wrestlers* (second quarter of the tenth century)—a motif that, with its *Laocoon*-like arrangement of coiled arms and legs, might have interested Michelangelo—in fact suggest a liquidity that is reminiscent of certain effects in Brancusi. The Cambodian gods assert their strength, but they frequently refuse to flaunt it. In one of the most beautiful works in the show, a male divinity from the eleventh century (number 65 in the catalog), the gently modeled torso is as subtle as one of those Khmer smiles. And the incised carving that describes the folds of the god's simple cloth wrap gives a welcome bit of specificity. Those crisp creases are like apt bits of punctuation.

At the National Gallery, a museumgoer can appreciate the polish that Cambodian artists bring to sandstone surfaces, and the aura of security that the clearest, most uncomplicated volume can exude. But when it comes to the miracle of the grandest, essentially sculptural monuments, such as the small temple of Banteay Srei and the huge Angkor Wat and Bayon, even the knowledgeable observer will be hard put to explain how a near-infinity of separate elements is united to create a totality that has an altogether different kind of power. Angkor Wat and the Bayon are religious architecture of a variety that bursts definitions and categories.

The builders use all the tricks of their trade—everything they know about form and structure and light and interval—to invent a space with otherworldly resonances. And by bringing divine space into the here and now, they create a transcendent experience that is, incredibly enough, knit into the fabric of human experience. Everybody notices how these monuments have been worn down by time, but what is far more interesting is that their meanings are not diminished so much as transformed. The architecture takes on new implications even as the very idea of the sacred that brought the temples into being fades away.

The ancient Cambodians set out to recreate the sacred world as a palpable reality. That this reality has changed and transmogrified, like everything else in the world, is the most magnificent proof that their labors were not in vain. As intrigued as we are by what Angkor once was, those of us who are not close students of ancient Cambodia are perhaps even more fascinated by what it has become. The immense tree trunks and root systems that overrun doorways and towers and statues, creating a disquieting interweave of nature and culture, have a haunting fascination, perhaps because the red sandstone reliefs seem as much a part of the natural order as the vegetation that threatens to overwhelm them. Those sandstone walls look triumphant even in disarray.

And even when Angkor Wat was losing its significance as the center of a cult of the Hindu god-king, it was acquiring a new meaning, as the heart of Cambodian Buddhism. Angkor Wat's galleries have at times been full of almost casually heaped Buddhas, some of which even today draw the pious to prayer. In the French photographer Marc Riboud's album, *Angkor: The Serenity of Buddhism* (Thames and Hudson), we see the gatherings of Buddhist monks, with their shaved heads and ascetic mien, still eating and praying and collecting alms in the shadows of these walls that were put up so long ago. In recent years, as the Cambodian government contemplated massive tourist development at Angkor, there has been good reason to wonder if Jayavarman VII's domain would not finally succumb to Angkor Disney, but at least for the moment those concerns are overshadowed by the unfolding horrors.

These stones speak—of Hindu kings, of Buddhist monks, and, now, of the dream of a modern democracy. During the darkest days of the '70s, when the world wondered if Angkor would survive at all, it was not only because people feared for its neglect, but perhaps even more because they understood that for Pol Pot the destruction of these ancient Cambodian monuments was part of a grand scheme to obliterate all of what Cambodia had been. Pol Pot spoke of returning Cambodia to "year zero"—his own brave new world—and in order to do so he meant to destroy not only the people who remembered

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anything, but also the things that they might remember. And for those in recent years who have hoped that Cambodia was becoming a place where freedom might flourish, these images of ancient gods and their mountainous retreats are at the heart of what must not be forgotten, of the full knowledge of the past that is integral to the life of the mind without which democracy cannot survive.

On July 11, when *The New York Times* ran a photograph of a soldier of Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party, rifle in hand, guarding Angkor Wat, there could be no doubt that Cambodia, of which Angkor Wat has become such a potent symbol, was again under siege. As for the mystery of how a building that originally honored the absolute power of a god-king could become the emblem of democracy's hope, that is only the most recent question to which the immense faces staring down from the towers of the Bayon have chosen to respond with their enigmatic smiles. •

Rage and Reason

By Martha C. Nussbaum

Life and Death: Unapologetic Writings on the Continuing War Against Women by Andrea Dworkin

(The Free Press, 252 pp., $23)

I.

Prophets don't write like philosophers. Why not, since they seem to have a common goal? Since Socrates, philosophers, like prophets, have been dedicated foes of ethical complacency, and of the many forms of moral disease complacency conceals. Socrates's call to the examined life was inspired by a concern for the health of souls. He once described the insides of his interlocutor as filled with tumorous growths, and his arguments as purgative drugs that would carry away the diseased material. This vivid sense of the ugliness of evil and the urgency of ethical change makes itself felt in the arguments of many of the greatest moral philosophers. Even when philosophers write calmly, as they usually do, an intense engagement with corruption can frequently be detected beneath the serene surface. (It would not be wrong to see the arguments of John Rawls, a deliberately abstract, cool philosopher, as motivated by the ugliness of human dignity violated, and a longing for the world that would be constructed by "purity of heart, if one could attain it.")

And yet, as I have said, philosophers do not write like prophets. If they excoriate evil, or call the heart to an acknowledgment of its transgressions, this is not their immediate business. That lies in the construction and the dissection of theories and arguments, often intricate and rather removed from the practical matters that were their starting point. They address the reader not with a cascade of resonant denunciation, but with delicacy and logic; not with "Woe unto you!" but with "Many different kinds of things are said to be just and unjust...." (That is Rawls, in an Aristotelian mode.)

Why do philosophers proceed in this way, when real evil is at hand? Sometimes it is because they are profoundly unworldly people who just don't know how to confront bad things. (Edmund Husserl, completely bewildered by the evil of Nazism, wrote shortly before his death in 1938 that he hoped soon to be in a "realm of truth," where such things do not exist.) Sometimes, too, it is because they are gentle, polite people who don't feel comfortable denouncing others, even if they know there is evil at hand. Often, though, there is a better reason for their restraint. It is that they share with Socrates a commitment to reason as an indispensable instrument in the struggle for good.

What do philosophers have to believe about people, in order to believe that a logical argument can produce a result in calling the soul to an acknowledgment of its own deficiencies? They have to believe, I think, that at least a part of evil is not innate or necessary, that at least a good part of evil is based on error, whether social or personal. (These errors may be very deep-rooted, shaping emotions as well as thoughts.) They also have to believe that people have many good beliefs and good intentions, so that there is at least a chance that, confronted with an argument that reveals hidden contradictions in their view, they will select the better and reject the worse. They probably need to believe, too, that reason is a morally good way to approach adversaries, one that shows respect for their humanity. Finally, they need to believe that the patient work of theory-construction can deliver a practical benefit in the long run, systematizing the best of our beliefs and intuitions in a way that reveals new possibilities for politics or morality.

All these beliefs, of course, are questionable. No philosopher's work can prove that the conditions for the worth of philosophizing are satisfied in the world, and to that extent all the work of philosophy is built upon what Kant would call a "practical postulate," a faith in a kind of goodness that is not empirically verifiable.

Prophets, by contrast, believe that the urgency and the magnitude of the evils that they see admit of no delay, no calm and patient dialogue. They believe that only by violently shaking the heart can they make progress against the complacency that is evil's great ally. Argument looks too unengaged, theory-construction too remote from the practical task. Jeremiah did not write a theory of justice, nor did Isaiah address the Israelites with dialectic. Even the philosopher's interest in the nuances of individual cases seems to prophets a dangerous detour, when by and large things are so hideously bad. Suppose Jeremiah had said, "The heart of Israel is corrupt utterly, but on the other hand there are some very nice people there." Or suppose Frederick Douglass had excoriated the evils of slavery but pointed to the moral goodness of certain individual slave-owners. Such philosophical delicacy would have undermined their purpose, which was to terrify and thereby to prompt tears and repentance and change.

In any movement for social justice, then, philosophers and prophets are likely to be somewhat at odds. To prophets, philosophical patience looks like collaboration with evil. (This impression is magnified when, as frequently happens, philosophical calm brings academic security, while the prophet is a despised outcast.) Philosophers, on the other hand, are likely to conclude that prophets do not get to the root of the problem, because they aren't patient enough to do the necessary work. They will be suspicious of the prophet's lack of attention to variety and nuance. They may sense that the prophet's way

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of speaking shows insufficient respect for the adversary's dignity. It just is not true that people are utterly corrupt; and we get the best out of our dealings with them by proceeding on the assumption that they want to think well and to be good.

Still, it is possible for philosophers and prophets to be (uneasy) allies. Philosophers may judge that their own methods are not the only ones that we need to approach human beings in a time of moral unrest, and they may grant that change sometimes requires a more confrontational style of discourse. (Mill's *The Subjection of Women* didn't have much influence with its calm, rational arguments, and its failure cannot be ascribed to Mill's philosophical insufficiency.) They may also feel some doubts about their practical postulate itself, wondering whether it is merely a convenient way of justifying a personal preference for detachment from politics, or even for personal comfort.

The whole idea of a feminist philosopher can thus be seen, by these philosophers themselves, as a problematic one, and the feminist prophet can prove as compelling as she is disturbing. Is it really right to proceed as if one can make progress by calmly arguing with men? Should one really assume that they are basically good, so that argument can change them? Should one say, "Yes, some are corrupt, but others are very nice"? Or isn't that the very cop-out that Jeremiah rejected?

II.

Andrea Dworkin knows that good men exist. Indeed, among the most moving passages in the autobiographical essay that opens her book (alongside portraits of strong women who inspired or helped her) is the portrait of her father, a gentle man who adored her and treated her with respect, challenging her Socratically to debate and to argument. Once in high school, asked to give an example of a great man in history, she named her father and was ridiculed. "But I meant it—that he had the qualities of true greatness, which I defined as strength, generosity, fairness, and a willingness to sacrifice self for principle." Dworkin also warmly praises her brother, a Jewish scientist who married an Austrian Catholic, also a scientist. They transcended "cultural differences and historical sorrow," she writes, "through personal love, the recognition of each other as individuals, and the exercise of reason, which they both, as scientists, valued." At his funeral, the chief rabbi of Vienna officiated and her father sat with the women, in protest

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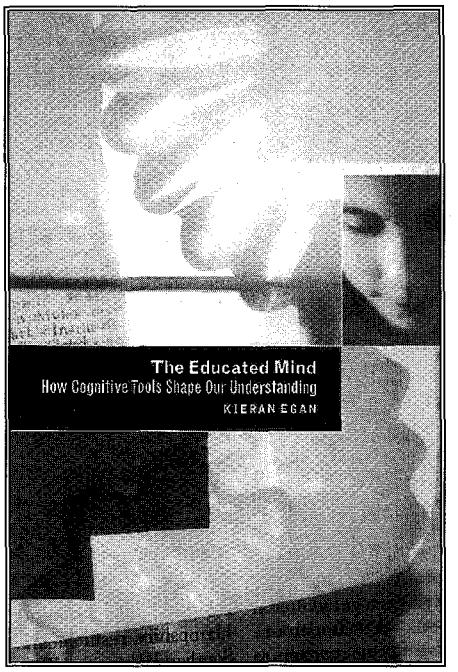

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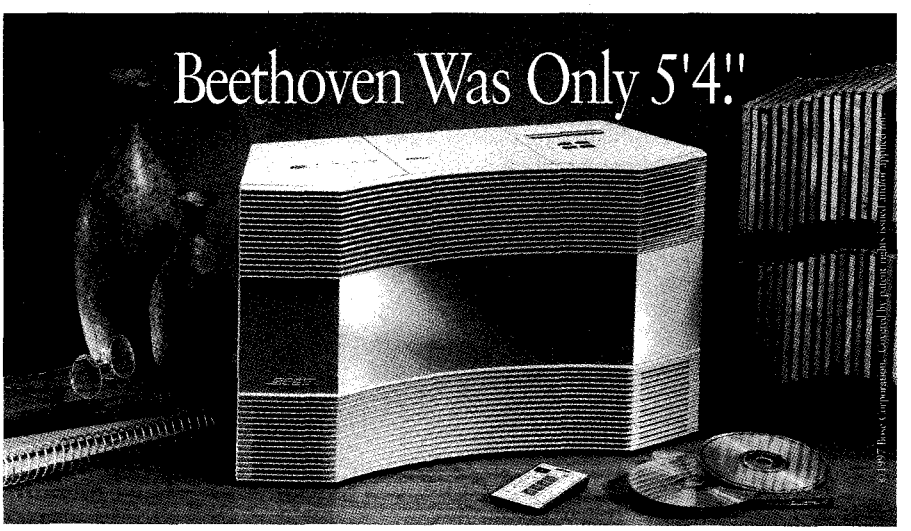

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against the Orthodox separation of the sexes. And finally there is the man with whom Dworkin has lived for twenty years: "I love John with my heart and soul.... We share a love of writing and of equality; and we share each and every day. He is a deeply kind person, and it is through the actual dailiness of living with him that I understand the spiritual poverty and the sensual stupidity of eroticizing brutality over kindness."

So: Dworkin, whose history includes child molestation by a stranger, sexual abuse by prison guards, domestic violence and prostitution, also knows that the world is complicated and contains some very good male people. She knows, too, that reason may do some good in this complex world. (Both her father and brother are portrayed sympathetically as reason-loving types, and her Jewish education is praised for teaching her the argumentative skills.) But Dworkin aims to deliver shocks to the heart. Her political hero is not Socrates or Kant, it is Frederick Douglass, "someone whose passion for human rights was both visionary and rooted in action," whose political speech "was suffused with emotion: indignation at human pain, grief at degradation, anguish over suffering, fury at apathy and collusion."

Dworkin's prose is a powerful instrument. (Less so in her fiction, with its frequently turgid stream-of-consciousness.) She is inspired to indignation and grief by the evils of violence against the female body, in rape, in domestic violence, in prostitution; and by the sheer fact that women throughout so much of the world's history have been understood to be mere objects for the use of men. To make a difference (she reports her own earlier reasoning), she will need to write in a way that strikes readers as "nightmarish and impolite," denying them the option of seeing themselves as "innocent bystander[s]." And she will have to give up "sentimentality" toward men in favor of a "militarist's" stance. What this means, among other things, is a focus on the evils perpetrated by "the collective him" and a refusal of sympathy, and of mercy, to many individual hims, each of whom a philosopher might hold to be basically good at heart, and capable of being persuaded.

Life and Death returns to some of the topics of *Woman Hating*, *Pornography* and *Intercourse*, and adds some new topics—the status of women in Israel, the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. But its primary focus is physical violence against women—stalking, misogynistic homicide, rape and, above all, domestic violence. (There is a fine piece on Nicole Brown Simpson.) Dworkin's essays have provoked much hostility, inside feminism and outside it. She is frequently called a man-hater, a foe of free speech, and many other things that are more expressive than precise. So any critical response should begin by trying to get clear about what she has actually claimed.

At the heart of Dworkin's position are two theses, one normative and one diagnostic. The normative thesis is that women deserve to be treated with a dignity equal to that of men, and given rights fully equal to those of men. (This idea is unmistakably Kantian.) The words "dignity," "human rights," "equality," "fairness" suffuse this text, making Dworkin's affiliations with a certain type of radical Enlightenment vision clear. For Dworkin, the central moral sin is treating a human being as an object.

Objectification, as Dworkin defines it, has a number of different aspects, which are not always clearly distinguished. Sometimes to objectify someone is to deny the person's autonomy; sometimes, to show indifference to the person's feelings and experiences; sometimes, to proceed as if the person's boundaries are not deserving of the same respect that one's own deserve; sometimes, to treat the person as fungible, easily replaceable by other similar objects. (Of course, these different ideas are closely linked, and one can well see how one might lead to the others.) But the central concept, I think, is that of instrumental use: what is always morally problematic, for Dworkin, is to treat other human beings as mere tools, rather than as ends in themselves. "The issue here," she concludes, "is the rights of human beings. And if you understand that women are human beings you must ask: What is the right and honorable and proper way for this person to be treated by that person?"

Why would a person treat another person as a mere thing? There may be many reasons in different contexts; but Kant held that this happens inevitably between men and women in the context of a sexual relationship. Sexual desire, he believed, makes people lose their grip on the moral point of view: "as soon as a person becomes an Object of appetite for another, all motives of moral relationship cease to function." Its intense sensations drive out, for a time, all thought of respect for humanity as an end, leading partners to treat one another as mere tools of their own urgent desires for pleasure. At the same time, their keen interest in pleasure leads them to permit themselves to be used as things by one another, indeed, to volunteer eagerly to be dehumanized so that they can dehumanize in turn.

Kant apparently thought that this tendency was intrinsic to sexual desire itself. This led him to conclude that desire should only be expressed within a relationship—marriage, as he saw it—that constructs moral regard institutionally by making the parties promise to care for one another. This proposal completely ignored the asymmetrical character of marriage and the extent to which its conception of women as property reinforces the thing-like treatment of women, giving men limitless sexual rights over women's bodies and making it very unlikely that the law will intervene to protect the women's boundaries from violence.

Without explicitly discussing Kant, Dworkin departs from the Kantian view in two important respects. First, she denies that the baneful tendencies that Kant imputes to sexual desire belong to it inevitably or as such. Indeed, Dworkin thinks that it is always a mistake to read existing social behavior as reflecting desire's underlying "nature," given the depth at which social and political structures contribute to shaping what we find desirable in a partner. And, apart from the social deformations caused by asymmetrical structures of power, Dworkin holds that sexual relationships can express regard for humanity.

Second, she focuses (as Kant did not) on the role of male-female asymmetry in constructing a pernicious form of sexual exchange in which men come to be aroused by the idea of turning a woman into a thing, and women come to find excitement in the thought of volunteering to be used as things. Here Dworkin's analysis lies close to that of Mill, who argued in *The Subjection of Women* that men, wishing to make willing rather than unwilling slaves of women, have "put everything in practice to enslave their minds," teaching women that "meekness, submissiveness, and resignation of all individual will" is "an essential part of sexual attractiveness." The idea that women's current behavior reveals their "nature" is scoffed at as much by Mill as by Dworkin, when he says that this is just like putting a tree half in a vapor bath and half in the snow, and then, seeing that one part is luxuriant and the other part withered, saying that it is "the nature of the tree" to be that way.

Dworkin does not speculate about how the sexual objectification of women began, though she suggests (again with Mill) that it is greatly helped along by the legal construction of marriage as involving limitless rights of sexual access. (Mill already argued in 1869 that the

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absence of laws against marital rape made women's status lower than that of slaves. Today most states in the United States still have some form of spousal exemption for rape.) What she does emphasize—this is her diagnostic thesis—is that men have been pervasively socialized to think that aggression, violence and the treatment of women as objects are just normal male attitudes, "boys being boys," and that women just have to put up with that. Given our society's tendency to glorify and to eroticize male violence, men frequently learn to find sexual satisfaction only in situations of dominance. The cultural portrayal of intercourse as conquest has deformed sexual relations, making it difficult for men to accept women both as sexual partners and as equals. "In order to get a response from men, one has to be the right kind of thing." And "[w]hen you enter the sexual agreement to be a thing, you then narrow your own possibilities for freedom."

Dworkin has frequently been portrayed as holding that all sexual intercourse is rape. Some of her more sweeping statements have supported such a reading. She should have been more circumspect here, demarcating her claims more precisely. Still, examining her rhetoric with care, one may discern a far more plausible and interesting thesis: that the sexualization of dominance and submission, and the perpetuation of these structures through unequal laws (such as the failure to criminalize marital rape or to prosecute domestic violence effectively), have so pervasively infected the development of desire in our society that "you cannot separate the so-called abuses of women from the so-called normal uses of women." This sentence certainly does not say that all acts of intercourse are abuses. It does say that the dominant paradigms of the normal are themselves culpable, so we can't simply write off the acts of rapists and batterers by saying that they are "abnormal." Gendered violence is too deep in our entire culture.

Dworkin observes that, no matter how often males use violence against other males, nobody concludes that men like being beaten up, or that it is in the nature of men to provoke violence by their bodily appearance. But women who do not leave abusive marriages, on account of economic dependence or terror or a conviction that they will die sooner or later anyway, are often portrayed as wanting abuse, and the abuse is often portrayed as a natural reflex of the jealous male nature. Again, until very recently it was standard courtroom policy to portray a rape victim as someone who "asked for it"; but such judgments are rarely made about men who get mugged. "There's a different standard of dignity," Dworkin concludes. What we should say, in both cases equally, is that human rights have been violated. But we don't say that frequently enough about women.

Up to this point, Dworkin says what few feminists today would find controversial. The legal proposals that her arguments have promoted or supported now enjoy widespread support in our society. Most feminists welcome the changes that have made it possible to complain of sexual harassment in the workplace and to demonstrate that an asymmetry of power is frequently at the root of what creates a "hostile work environment." These concepts, developed by Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon, are now commonplace in our legal culture, and have been validated recently in workplace opinions by such non-radical judges as William Rehnquist and Richard Posner.

Most feminists would hardly wish to return to the situation of thirty years ago, where a raped woman would have to show that she resisted "to the utmost" or was physically harmed in a struggle, and where a woman's prior sexual history would be used against her as evidence in a rape trial, to show that she "asked for it." Most feminists also would gladly concur with Dworkin's central conclusion in her new book: that laws against domestic violence should be far more effectively enforced, and that our society should intervene in many more ways to provide women with alternatives to staying in abusive relationships. Dworkin's suggestion that women who retaliate violently against their batterers should in some cases be allowed to plead self-defense also enjoys widespread support.

It is a curious feature of contemporary feminism that one repeatedly encounters women who denounce MacKinnon and Dworkin as man-haters, but who gladly enjoy, and even take credit for, the legal reforms that were made possible only through concepts they introduced. Dworkin and MacKinnon are radicals; but their radicalism has proven broadly acceptable, in large part because they call a culture based on rights and equal dignity to full consistency with itself.

III.

Pornography is a different matter. *Life and Death* describes the episode in Dworkin's career that has, more than any other, led to widespread vilification: her association with MacKin-

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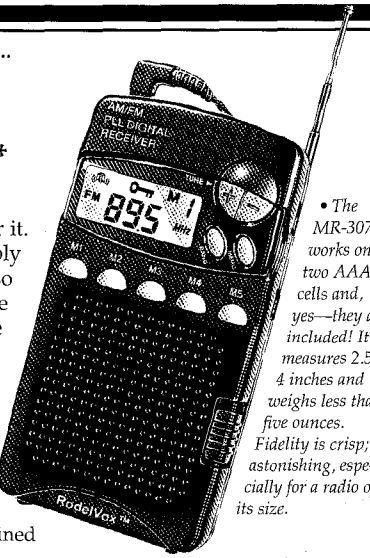

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non working for legal changes in this area. It is extremely common to hear the two assailed as apostles of censorship; but often the ideas themselves are not described with any precision.

Dworkin's persuasive argument about cultural patterns of objectification prompts an obvious question. How are these bad attitudes about women reproduced, in a culture that in some respects accords women equal dignity as persons? Dworkin answers that a key part of the causal story is violent and humiliating pornography. Pornographic images repeatedly portray women as dirty and debased, as asking to be raped, as deserving violent or abusive treatment. Pornography commonly portrays the will of women from a fictive male viewpoint, expressing the thought that they *want* to be used as things for male pleasure. Describing a photograph in which a pregnant woman gleefully sticks a hose up herself, Dworkin comments: "This is not a human being. One cannot look at such a photograph and say, This is a human being, she has rights, she has freedom, she has dignity, she is someone. One cannot. That is what pornography *does* to women."

In Dworkin's view, of course, our whole culture is suffused with such attitudes, and pornography is far from being their only source. Yet she argues, drawing both on experimental evidence and on testimony from women whose batterers made them re-enact pornographic scenarios, that it is a very prominent cause of the "boys-will-be-boys" indifference to violence. (It is hard not to think this way, when Larry Flynt, who portrayed the dismemberment of a woman in a meat grinder as arousing, is canonized as a saint of free speech, while the Nazis who marched in Skokie are regarded as despicable scum whose rights just might be protected by the First Amendment. What does this difference show us about ourselves?) Regarding pornography as rather like a dangerous drug that causes harm, she and MacKinnon have attempted to create a legal remedy for women who are victims of these harms.

Neither MacKinnon nor Dworkin recommends using the criminal law to punish the makers or the distributors of pornography. Nor have they called for censorship of pornographic materials. What they have proposed (with brief success in Indianapolis, before a federal appellate court ruled against them) is a civil ordinance, under which women who have been harmed by pornography can sue its makers and distributors for damages, and ask an administrative agency to issue an injunction against the offenders. The potential plaintiffs were envisaged as of two types: actresses who are harmed while making pornographic films, and battered women who can show a sufficient causal connection between the abuse and the man's use of pornographic materials. The category of material that would be potentially actionable is both narrower and broader than the materials that are potentially illegal under current obscenity law: narrower because sexual explicitness by itself is not found problematic, if there is no humiliation or violence; broader because there is no escape clause for redeeming social value, and no permissible appeal to the sense of the work as a whole to establish such redeeming value.

People who attack this proposal simply on the grounds that they are in favor of the First Amendment are not saying anything intellectually respectable. The First Amendment has never covered all speech; bribery, threats, extortionate offers, misleading advertising, perjury and unlicensed medical advice are all unprotected. Indeed, in 1918, when Eugene Debs went to jail for sedition on account of speeches urging people to resist military service, the First Amendment wasn't even held to cover the type of political speech that is currently recognized as lying at its very core. So the argument cannot be that pornography is speech, so it must be protected. Instead, the argument must be made that it is the type of speech that ought to be protected by the First Amendment.

Such an argument against Dworkin must be based on extensive legal analysis, something that many of her opponents (but not all of them) fail to offer. They need to grapple also with the fact that we currently have a legal obscenity standard that renders illegal (on other grounds) most of the materials that concern Dworkin; and that we also have a variety of other laws—against cigarette and alcohol advertising, for example—that reflect our society's view that some speech is harmful and needs regulation. Moreover, we now permit people harmed by tobacco products and the advertising surrounding them to sue the makers of those products for damages. Under certain circumstances, sellers of alcohol are also liable for damages their products have caused. (But we do not currently allow damage suits against those who speak or write in praise of alcohol or tobacco.) Most Western democracies, moreover, allow more regulation of hate speech than we do: Germany's restrictions on anti-Semitic speech and Britain's Race Relations Act, for example, need to be considered as we ponder what we really want to say.

How, then, should one object to the MacKinnon-Dworkin proposal? Certainly one should begin by acknowledging that it addresses the proper moral target, in the sense that material depicting the abuse of women as sexy is morally problematic in a way that the traditional category of the "obscene" does not seem to be. (Defined in terms of the vague notion of appeal to "prurient interest," that category has frequently led to a focus on depictions of reciprocal sex that are just a little too frank for some judge's taste—as with *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.) One should also grant that such representations of women as made for abuse are likely to contribute in some way to the general climate of violence against women that is among our pressing social problems. And then the objections should begin.

One reasonable objection might be that MacKinnon and Dworkin have never satisfactorily articulated a theory of the distinction between law and morals, and that we need a general account of this notoriously problematic line in order to carry the argument further. Many bad things aren't, and shouldn't be, illegal. Even under Mill's "harm" principle, a case can surely be argued for some regulation of pornography. But Dworkin never argues such a case, though she seems to agree with Mill's objection to laws against the merely offensive. More argument might have clarified her position.

Next, given the ubiquity of violence in our society, the causal links between pornography and any particular case of harm are probably too difficult to establish. With cigarette smoking, we have a control group of non-smokers to examine. Men in America have been exposed to a wide range of images of women, in the media, in advertising and, in many cases, in pornography. Perhaps we cannot adequately distinguish the contributions of these different sources, showing that in a given case of abuse pornography, and not the man's earlier socialization, was the primary cause.

It is unclear, moreover, under what circumstances we should hold the producer of a work liable for the harms that it inflicts. *Crime and Punishment* gave rise to copycat murders. Nietzsche's writing influenced the Nazis. In both cases, the murderers were to some extent misreading the work, whereas the batterer who imitates a violent porn book or video is not misreading (except in the sense that the maker of the work plainly aimed at masturbation, not real-life enactment). But MacKinnon and Dworkin probably cannot use this distinction, given their

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rejection of the appeal to the sense of the work as a whole. It seems plausible, then, that making authors liable for what copycat criminals do will exert a stifling effect on some valuable speech.

Fourth, we might object that such an ordinance is very likely to be abused in practice. Judges are likely to prove bad analysts of sexual stereotypes and their effect. The history of obscenity law shows us that work of high human value is likely to be targeted, while much harmful trash escapes unscathed. Indeed, insofar as they refuse appeal to the sense of the work as a whole, MacKinnon and Dworkin make it possible to indict some feminist work—say, Dworkin's fiction—that graphically portrays the sexual abuse of women, with the overall purpose of sensitizing us to its terrible character. James Lindgren has shown that 63 percent of students who were shown an extract from Dworkin's novel *Mercy* ranked it as pornographic under MacKinnon's and Dworkin's own definition of pornography (almost as high a proportion as *The Story of O*, one of Dworkin's central examples of pornography)—though they did not rank it as obscene under a modified version of the current Supreme Court obscenity test.

This points to another and more fundamental issue. There is value in Dworkin's prophetic examination of the pornographic; the ability to study troubling cultural representations without fear of legal penalty is an important part of effecting social change, and so even someone convinced of the moral case against pornography might plausibly be disturbed by the legal pressures such an ordinance might create. But should we accept Dworkin's moral thesis? Many objectors have defended the value of a type of pornography that she does not attack (works involving consensual, nonhumiliating activity that would be far more likely to be targeted by the current obscenity test than by her test). Others have simply refused to acknowledge that there is any moral problem in the representation of women as meant for abuse and humiliation. (This, I think, is an implausible position.) But there is another position, one that appeals to the all-important issue of context and sense in the work as a whole.

Sexual objectification of various types occurs within many relationships that are, in their larger structure, relationships of equality and respect. Within such an established context, forms of treatment that might otherwise undermine dignity (for example, treating a person, for a time, as identical with his or her bodily parts) do not undermine dignity. One might reformulate Kant's position as the claim that one moral goal of an intimate relationship is to establish a context within which respect can be taken on trust, so that acts that would elsewhere mean domination and subordination do not, therefore, mean this. Dworkin allows that in individual lives penetration and receptivity may have other meanings; but the ordinance that she proposes makes no distinctions of context, and thus it might be used to target representations that even a sympathizer with Dworkin's argument might judge morally good.

For a combination of these reasons, I am inclined to oppose the MacKinnon-Dworkin ordinance as a legal remedy for the harms of violent pornography. Still, Dworkin has identified an urgent problem that needs to be treated with moral seriousness. Feminists who deny this should ask whether women can really make progress in areas such as rape law and the prosecution of domestic abuse, when a jury of their peers has been raised on images that depict such abuses as exactly what women are about.

IV.

Prophets may also be false prophets. That is how many feminists view Dworkin's attacks on sexual corruption. A calm examination of Dworkin's views can help to articulate more precisely the sense of her claims, and to show what is plausible and valuable in them; but that is not the end of the matter, even philosophically. There are some general worries about the nature of Dworkin's undertaking that must be faced.

The first worry concerns Dworkin's obsessive focus on the sexual as the locus of women's subordination, and her apparent indifference to economic issues. Dworkin holds that it is because men view women as sex objects that women do not enjoy equal dignity. She therefore sees a change in socially constructed forms of sexual desire as the key to women's equality. Yet men have traditionally viewed women in other ways as well: as bearers of, and carers for, children; as homemakers; as performers of domestic labor. It is plausible to think that these powerful interests reinforce and perpetuate the more narrowly sexual forms of subordination, and may even collude in their creation.

If one sees things this way, one will think that the key to women's equality is to promote their economic advantage, focusing on employment, credit, land rights and other issues of daily self-sufficiency. In developing countries today, feminists are split over these issues: some reject projects as non-feminist if they do not focus, Dworkin-style, on the criticism of sex roles, while others insist that such criticism can never bear fruit unless women first enjoy greater economic self-sufficiency. There is no necessary incompatibility between the two approaches; but Dworkin's failure to acknowledge the economic aspect of inequality means that she offers very uncertain guidance for practical change, especially in the developing world.

Another worry concerns Dworkin's attitude to reasoned persuasion. In her new book, one finds less hostility to argument than in her other writings, but Dworkin's contemptuous attitude to her opponents, and her failure to engage in calm exchanges of ideas, has not disappeared, and it is troubling. Maybe Dworkin is right. Maybe most people are so distracted, or obtuse, or jaded, that only highly colored rhetoric can shake them, and a calm argument will leave their prejudices untouched. But it seems more productive to believe that people are innocent of the refusal of reason until proven guilty over a long period of time, and that we should always make the first move toward them on the assumption that they would like to search along with us for an adequate account. Doesn't prophetic rhetoric of Dworkin's sort objectify people in its own way, reducing them to their sins rather than regarding them with respect, as ends in themselves?

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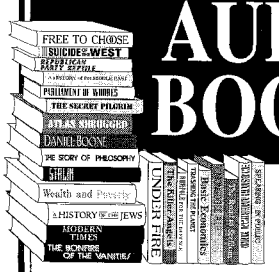

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I have referred to Dworkin's "fire-and-brimstone" rhetoric. My deepest concern about her project lies here. Dworkin's attitude to men exemplifies the unattractive traits that are commonly, and falsely, attributed to the Jewish god: a focus on retributive justice, a total absence of compassion and mercy. Her novel *Mercy* is all about why it is correct to refuse mercy to men, and best to regard them in the light of strict retributive justice, paying them back in kind for the wrongs that they have done to women. Like most old-time retributivists, Dworkin doesn't even think it terribly important which individual gets the punishment, since the sins are understood to belong to the whole "house" or race, and individuals are guilty in virtue of this membership.

Life and Death, too, contains the denunciation of evil without the vision of reconciliation, fury without mercy, hatred without love. Indeed, Dworkin repeatedly expresses sympathy with violent extralegal resistance against male violence: "If we have to fight back with arms, then we have to fight back with arms. One way or another we have to disarm men." Dworkin is right to claim that feminists have used "extraordinary patience and self-restraint" by responding with words and not with violence, as have most other oppressed groups; but this does not mean that a commitment to nonviolence is not a good feminist choice. Surely it must not be a source of shame. ("I have a long history of violence against me, and I say, to my increasing shame, that everyone who has hurt me is still walking around.")

One might favor legal and nonviolent means while still being a strict retributivist, opposed to sympathy and mercy. Kant, who denied a right to revolution, also held that only the retributive attitude expresses respect for the criminal's personhood. Pleas for sympathy (attributing the wrong, for example, to bad cultural forces rather than personal evil) are seen as diminishing personhood by negating responsibility. (Justice Thomas has recently followed Kant's lead in his remarks about criminal sentencing of minority defendants.) But sympathy and mercy need not diminish personhood. They may simply express the thought that all human beings are weak and fallible, in part the creation of their social milieu and not fully culpable for evils that are bred into them by the unjust conditions they inhabit.

Such an idea is a valuable one for a prophet of social change, for it can forge a link between the corrupt world that the prophet decries and a new world of equality and respect. Martin Luther King Jr. understood this well. He saw that a prophet must lead people out of something bad *and* into something good. His use of prophetic language created a space within which love might come to exist, and a world made ugly by hierarchy might be redeemed by the beauty of equality. Dworkin's rhetoric, by contrast, contains no space for reconciliation, no positive vision. Her nonforgiveness toward men, like her refusal of reason, is itself an act of violent aggression, expressing the thought that men will be punished forever for their bad acts by being refused entry into any world that is good.

This is a message that is ultimately at odds with Dworkin's own view of the possibilities of human life, though it is perhaps entailed by her decision to talk about a "collective him" rather than to make more fine-grained distinctions. Certainly it is a vision that cripples social progress by identifying the call for justice with a state of permanent hostility. Mercy may be given from a position of weakness, because one has been taught that women are sympathetic creatures who shouldn't demand their rights. Yet it may also be given from a position of strength, because one is confident that one has dignity, and one has some confidence in the possibilities of reason and reconciliation. Nietzsche once said that mercy toward the aggressor is "the self-overcoming of justice." Dworkin gives us the call for justice without any space for its self-overcoming.

MARTHA C. NUSSBAUM's new book, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education,* will be published by Harvard University Press this fall.

The Beginning of the End

BY ISTVAN DEAK

Nazi Germany and the Jews Volume 1: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939 by Saul Friedländer

(HarperCollins, 436 pp., $30)

Short of discovering a new cache of hidden documents, it is no longer possible to say something dramatically new on the terrible subject of Nazi Germany and the Jews. It would be dramatic, of course, to find a decree, over Hitler's signature, ordering the systematic extermination of the Jews, or a plan prepared by top Nazi officials in, say, 1933, proving that the party was resolved, even at that early date, to bring about the annihilation of all the Jews. But it is unlikely that such documents will be found, for the simple reason that they never existed. The National Socialist leadership and the Führer, in particular, were too cautious to put such things in writing. We are left, therefore, with these technical uncertainties.

What can one add to the thousands of books and articles that have already been written on the German persecution of Jews? Saul Friedländer cannot perform miracles any more than the rest of us, but in this superb volume he shows that, even today, a rational, measured and many-sided reinterpretation of the evidence can help us take one small step closer toward comprehending the nearly incomprehensible Holocaust.

Although Friedländer's book presents the years from 1933 to 1939 primarily from the perspective of the victims, it also deals with the development of Nazi policies, changes in public opinion, official and private anti-Semitism, the Jewish response to the anti-Semitic measures, and the world's reaction to the persecution of German Jews, all with quiet elegance, a good deal of sarcasm, and even a fine sense of humor. Friedländer's work follows in the tradition of the great Holocaust studies, begun by Raul Hilberg in the 1960s, which have always emphasized stylistic restraint, wanting the facts to speak for themselves. But restraint has never meant a lack of inner passion. Friedländer's engagement and indignation are evident on every page.

The question remains whether a book written with such restraint can gain the popularity that it deserves. To date, the sum of learned Holocaust studies have not been sufficient to satisfy the public. There remains a yearning for a final, categorical answer to such questions as who precisely ordered the execution of the

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European Jews and when they did so, where these plans originated and how the responsibility of the German army, German functionaries and, above all, ordinary Germans for this crime can be measured.

The public's frustration with the existing literature, no matter how learned, was demonstrated by the success of Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust.* This extensive study delivered two basic messages: that at least 100,000, but probably many more, ordinary Germans willingly participated in the genocide of the Jews; and that even more Germans, virtually the entire nation, applauded the hateful humiliation, brutalization and killings that went by the name of "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question." As to the question of motive, Goldhagen finds it in the German national tradition, in a culture of eliminationist anti-Semitism that had begun centuries earlier and continued unabated until its culmination in the Third Reich.

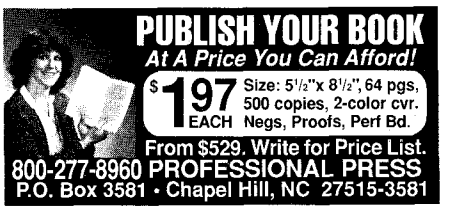
Goldhagen's book must have already sold more copies in the United States than all the previously published Holocaust studies put together. It has been even more successful in Germany, where its message has allowed the younger generations of Germans to feel repentant for the crimes committed by their parents and grandparents—and also to feel free of guilt because, as a much disputed footnote in the book indicates, the Germans of the post-1945 period are better people, not at all like their ancestors. Perhaps Friedländer's *Nazi Germany and the Jews* can bridge the gap between the older writings that the public seems to find too cautious and too complicated and a book such as Goldhagen's, which many specialists find too categorical.

Goldhagen believes that the German people embraced and consensually—one might even say, democratically—practiced an eliminationist version of anti-Semitism. Saul Friedländer believes that the Nazi Party elite and a minority of other Germans embraced a redemptive type of anti-Semitism, which demanded the annihilation of the Jews in order to save the German people from racial degeneration. Only through the death of Jews, they believed, could the German people be set free. This belief, whose foremost practitioner was Hitler himself, was not shared by all Nazis, Friedländer tells us, and less even by the German people as a whole. Unlike the party elite, which was driven by both idealism and murderous rage, most party members and most ordinary Germans, he suggests, merely engaged in tacit acquiescence or compliance.

Friedländer asserts that the majority of Germans shied away from violence against the Jews, and such "ordinary" Germans who did participate in the massacres were not very different from the "ordinary" Austrians, Romanians, Ukrainians, Balts and other Europeans who also participated in the killings. In other words, Friedländer rejects the intentionalist thesis, whose most recent and radical advocate is Goldhagen, namely, that there had always been a "demonic script," and that the Nazis, or even the Germans as a nation, had always intended to kill the Jews and were only waiting for the opportunity to do so. But Friedländer also rejects the extreme functionalist argument, according to which the Holocaust was a sort of incidental outcome of bureaucratic bungling, political intrigue and the chaos so characteristic of the competing Nazi fiefdoms. Friedländer sees more causes for the Holocaust than are seen by either the intentionalists or the functionalists. And his complicated views are shared by more and more specialists today.

Most of the book is dedicated to proving Friedländer's persuasive thesis. He argues that, unlike their leaders, the majority of Germans did not maintain an apocalyptic vision of the Jewish presence in their midst. Like many other Europeans, the majority of Germans preferred that Jews disappear from their midst or, at least, that there be far fewer Jews, but these Germans did not perceive the Jewish problem in the religious, mystical sense advocated by Hitler and his cohorts. Friedländer attaches enormous importance to Hitler's ferocious anti-Semitism, which he had brought with him from pre-World War I Vienna, and to the commanding role that he played in the anti-Jewish measures taken in the pre-World War II period.

In this book, the first of a two-volume study, Friedländer discusses what might be mordantly described as the comparatively happier years of German Jewry. Between 1933 and 1939, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of German Jews were beaten to death in prisons, in concentration camps, or in their homes, but there were as yet no ghettos. Most Jews lived in their own homes; the great majority continued to earn a living, and a significant minority among them lived very well. Jewish culture flourished under the Nazis. Driven out of the Aryanized theaters, orchestras, schools and editorial boards, German Jews educated and entertained each other, producing fine works of art, drama, fiction and scholarship.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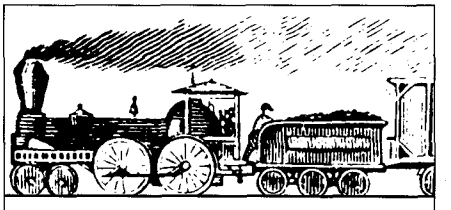

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Joy

Joy may not find me, it's true, but if I glimpse her
Pausing tomorrow at dawn under my window
With her basket of plums and dewy roses
And I hear her singing, I'll welcome her in.

I won't be afraid this time I'll be disappointed
By her ordinary appearance and prefer to dream
Of what she might be. I won't step back as unworthy,
A man with a soul too few of the needy

Turn to for help. So what if my talents
Would have led to bigger results for my species
If I'd set an ambitious agenda and kept to it.
There won't be time, if Joy makes her appearance,

To ask why a sluggard is included among the few
Who sense the sun is shining for them, the wind
Blowing in for them from afar to lift their curtains,
The finches singing for them from the lilac tree.

It's an insult to Joy if I rank her merely
As another handmaid to Justice. If she comes to my porch,
She'll wait with a patience nothing I ever do
Will begin to repay. My test will be to believe

She knows what's best for me and has come to bring it
When I won't be able to say where she comes from,
Her face unfamiliar, lit from within
By a spirit likely to remain a mystery.

CARL DENNIS

What prevented the years 1933-1939 from being entirely catastrophic was the continued possibility for Jews to leave Germany. Emigration was fostered even more by the Nazis than by the German Jews themselves. (This fact flies in the face of the intentionalist thesis that Hitler and company had always planned to destroy all the Jews.) But emigration was no easy affair. The same German bureaucracy that wanted the Jews gone made the process of emigration an endless obstacle course, during which the would-be emigrant gradually lost his home, his job and his possessions, only to meet with failure when, as often happened, an exit permit expired, or a previsa expired, or a reserved berth on a ship was no longer reserved, or permission to change German marks into a foreign currency was denied. The procedure had to begin anew, and by then it was usually too late.

Still, the biggest obstacle to Jewish emigration from Germany was not the German authorities, but other governments and legislatures. With the paradoxical exception of the Japanese government, which did not mind if German Jews emigrated to Shanghai, a Chinese city forcibly held by the Japanese army, and the French government, which, although increasingly hostile to Jewish refugees, still allowed hordes of them to settle temporarily in France, the rest of the world did not want to have the Jews, or they wanted only the well-connected, the talented and the rich.

What fooled many German Jews into believing that emigration was no urgent matter was, besides their patriotism, the sympathetic attitude of many Germans, and the seemingly restrained behavior of the Nazi regime itself. It is true, and Friedländer marshals plenty of evidence to prove this point, that in many towns and villages German functionaries, mayors and the public hastened to deprive the Jews even of rights that had not yet been denied them by the government. Excluded from swimming pools, public parks and restaurants, or simply driven out of townships, Jews were provided with plenty of evidence of a widespread Jew-hatred. What confused matters, however, was that in other regions of the country farmers insisted on doing business with Jews even against the wishes of the authorities. Jews, the farmers felt, had better goods and sold them at cheaper prices. In the larger cities, such as Berlin, major anti-Jewish boycotts conducted by the SA and SS were largely ignored by the public. Even party members in uniform casually shopped in Jewish stores. The nationwide atrocity known as Kristallnacht, on November 9, 1938, was not a popular act, it was an officially organized pogrom in which the civilian population played almost no role and in which, for every grinning bystander, there was one who abhorred the scenes of violence and destruction.

There were other reasons why German Jews were not in a hurry to leave. Decorated war veterans and officers in the reserve could not believe that the fatherland would turn its back on them. If it had not been for that "illogical anti-Semitism," many conservative Jews would have happily embraced Hitler's economic and social program. (In March 1933, one or two Jews announced that, despite everything, they would vote for Hitler. Remember that Jews formed a very strong contingent in the leadership of Mussolini's Fascist Party.) At times, the German government itself seemed to go out of its way to prevent anti-Jewish excesses. Hitler's Jew-hatred was boundless, but so was his jealous guardianship of absolute power; and so he occasionally intervened to stop the anti-Semitic zealots. He alone would decide what would happen to the Jews and when. Spontaneous actions were not to be tolerated.

Also, at least until 1937, the Führer was under the influence of Hjalmar Schacht and other financiers, who feared that the anti-Semitic measures would lead to a worldwide boycott of German business. Only when it became clear that the world would not lift a finger on behalf of the German Jews, and when he no longer needed Schacht, did Hitler adopt more and more ruthless measures. There was a very direct relationship between the indifference of the governments of the United States, Britain, Scandinavia, Switzerland and other states regarding the German Jews and the Nazi decision to clamp down on them. Unfortunately, there was also a direct connection between the actions of sympathetic Germans and the hesitation of many German Jews to leave. Had all Germans been like Julius Streicher, editor of the notorious anti-Semitic rag *Der Stürmer*, many more Jews would have left the country, even barefoot. It sounds perverse, but a completely generalized and universal anti-Semitism in Germany, of the kind that Goldhagen believes existed before

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1939, might have saved Jewish lives.

Friedländer explains persuasively what it meant to be a non-Jew in Nazi Germany. "The relief felt at not being Jewish must have been immense." Now even the poorest, most miserable German could feel privileged. Small wonder, then, that many Jews and even more half or quarter Jews made immense efforts to be accepted. Writing from Vienna, the converted Jew Franz Werfel promised, in March 1933, not to criticize the new German regime if only he be allowed to remain a member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences. Or maybe it was to ensure the German sale of *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, Werfel's paean to Armenian resistance in the face of the Turkish onslaught during World War I.

At least in the beginning, the anti-Semitic measures divided the Jewish community in Germany. At first, many exceptions were made for those who had served in the war, or had demonstrated outstanding abilities. These distinctions added to the already existing differences between the diverse religious factions, German and East European Jews, the wealthy and the poor, the progressives and the conservatives, the liberal assimilationists and the Jewish nationalists, the Zionists and the anti-Zionists, the devout and those for whom religious practice was but a tribal tradition. There were also about 200,000 *Mischlinge* of the first and second degree—that is, persons with one or two Jewish grandparents—whose complicated cases overburdened the courts, and whose dream was to be accepted as full Germans. Is a person who is 62 percent Jewish a *Mischling* or a Jew, one office wanted to know? The answer that came from above ruled that such a person was a Jew. The most important concern of the courts was not, however, the status of *Mischlinge*, but questions of Jewish-Aryan sexual relations, the worst possible crime in the eyes of the redemptive anti-Semites. "Is mutual masturbation intercourse?" a lower court wanted to know. The answer from above confirmed the lower court's suspicion: mutual masturbation by a Jew and an Aryan amounted to nothing less than race defilement.

It is hard to remember today how active anti-Semites were in those years. In 1920, Henry Ford published his best-selling version of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a viciously anti-Semitic pamphlet which had already been unmasked by then as a crude forgery. In the same year, the London *Times* cautiously indicated that the "Protocols" must be authentic. It is not surprising that many, in Germany as well as elsewhere, could not escape the influence of this avalanche of propaganda. Most of it was legitimized in the public eye by the significant Jewish participation in the Bolshevik Revolution and the world Communist movement. Still, it is heartbreaking to read, in Friedländer's account, of how few non-Jews protested what was, after all, the Nazis' systematic violation of the German constitution and of natural law. Michael Cardinal Faulhaber, an outspoken anti-Nazi, approved of the early anti-Semitic measures, and so did the Protestant Bishop Otto Dibelius, who publicly stated that Jewry has played "a leading role in all the destructive manifestations of modern civilization." Even the celebrated Confessing Church stood up only for the Jewish Christians. For a short time, even Thomas Mann believed in the existence of a Jewish world conspiracy. As for the university professors and the students, they were, with a few exceptions, among the worst enemies of fairness and justice.

The most exasperating chapters of Friedländer's book concern the heartless reaction of the world to the plight of the German Jews. In Austria, following the *Anschluss* in 1938, Adolf Eichmann and the Jewish community leaders successfully organized a mass exodus of Jews, so that in March 1939 only a little over one half of them were left. Still, the Nazi newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* came close to the truth when it announced triumphantly that "NOBODY WANTS THEM!" Early in 1938, there were still 360,000 Jews in the so-called *Altreich*. Meanwhile the Swiss had actively obstructed the Nazi plan for Jewish emigration, by requiring that the German authorities stamp the passports of German Jews with a "J" for "*Jude*": in this way the Swiss police would be able "to check at the border whether the carrier of the passport was Aryan or not Aryan." With the exception of a few leading Communist refugees, many of whom the NKVD would later shoot, the Soviet Union would not admit even those Jews who were Soviet citizens. The Polish government played a game of cat and mouse with the Polish Jewish citizens who had been expelled from Germany. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Great Britain and other places took in only a handful of German and Austrian Jews.

On January 30, 1939, Hitler announced the coming annihilation of the Jewish race in the Reichstag. By then, there were still 213,000 Jews in the *Altreich*, two-thirds of them over 45 years of age. The redemptive battle for the salvation of Aryan humanity could begin.

ISTVAN DEAK is Seth Low Professor of History at Columbia University.

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 5*

out a community, there is no need to provide such aid to families with higher incomes—families with vouchers will move into neighborhoods that already have a range of incomes. The House bill, however, would reserve 60 percent of new vouchers for families earning as much as $35,000 annually.

Portable vouchers cannot be the only answer to reforming housing policies. Chait is wrong to say public housing has been a failure in most U.S. communities; local housing authorities maintain decent, safe public housing communities. The administration's reform proposal would increase the chances that they remain livable housing resources for low-income Americans well into the next century.

ANDREW CUOMO
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

Jonathan Chait is right on target in his critique of housing legislation being considered by Congress, but he misquotes me. I did not tell a congressional committee that vouchers "might require more funding," but rather that Congress should fund more vouchers. Per family, vouchers are less expensive than public housing—a point I have made repeatedly in writing and congressional testimony. Letting public housing residents have vouchers, as the administration proposed two years ago, will not cost more money than current policy; letting more poor people have vouchers, or any other form of housing assistance, will cost more.

JOHN C. WEICHER
Hudson Institute
Washington, D.C.

Jonathan Chait replies:

My characterization of John C. Weicher's comments may have been a bit muddled, but it was not a misquote, since it wasn't a quote at all. I did not intend to suggest that Weicher thinks vouchers are more expensive than public housing, only that, as his letter states, vouchers' success would impel Congress to fund more of them. The wording I used probably should have made this distinction more clear.

THE NEW REPUBLIC welcomes unsolicited manuscripts and article proposals. Because of the volume of submissions, we regret that we cannot acknowledge an article or return it unless it is accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If articles are accepted for publication, authors will be notified within two weeks. **No fax or phone queries, please.**

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NEW YORK DIARIST

Buckle up

AS I WAS SETTLING INTO A TAXI last week, Placido Domingo told me to fasten my seat belt. I asked my driver, "Did you hear that?" Mr. Htlpx was busy conversing in his native tongue on his walkie-talkie with another driver from the same distant planet, so he paid me no attention. When we arrived at my destination (an unusual consequence of a taxi ride), I again heard the voice of Placido Domingo, this time urging me to get a receipt, and "See me at the opera!"

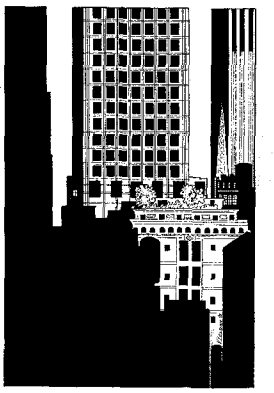
THIS EXPERIENCE WAS EXPLAINED by a story in the *Daily News* the next day announcing that Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has engaged celebrities to make the taxicab recordings that have been in use in New York since last year, advising riders to fasten seat belts, take their belongings and get receipts. Besides Domingo, the celebrities include Joan Rivers, Judd Hirsch, Eartha Kitt, sex therapist Dr. Ruth Westheimer and Yankees Manager Joe Torre. Each recording has a special individual touch, appropriate to the particular star. Joe Torre says, "See you at the stadium!"

THE MAYOR'S VENTURE SEEMS ILL-advised to me. For one thing, it is stupid, and, for another, he has chosen the wrong celebrities to deliver the cautionary announcement. If one really wanted to convey the prudence of fastening one's seat belt, it would be much more effective to have Robert De Niro record the message. In the movie *Taxi Driver*, De Niro was frightening and insane, just like real taxi drivers. Let Eartha Kitt purr the advice to gather my belongings, and I start to hum "Santa Baby." But I would buckle up in a hurry if De Niro told me to, and I'd ask for a receipt, and I'd certainly never look him in the eye, lest he say, "You zpglfing at me?"

THERE ARE MANY NEW YORK CELEBrities also better equipped to produce memorable messages than Joan Rivers, such as Vincent "Chin" Gigante—he of the bathrobe, bedroom slippers and insanity defense for seven counts of murder. "Call me crazy," says Chin, "but I think you should fasten your seat belt, whatever that is. See you at the Actors Studio!"

ONE MAY REACH FOR FAMOUS voices beyond the city limits of New York: "Hi! This is Fidel Castro. Don't forget to share your belongings. See you in C-U-B-A." Or: "Hi, I'm Bill Clinton, and that's a very pretty skirt you're wearing. See you at the White House!" Or, if you really wanted to get a rider's attention: "Hi! This is Dr. Kevorkian. Don't sweat the seat belt. See you eventually!"

ACCORDING TO THE *DAILY NEWS*, Dr. Westheimer "owes a special debt to cabbies," who were among the first to listen to her call-in sex-therapy advice radio show in the 1980s. This may explain why cab drivers are so knowledgeable about sexual practices. Her message, she told the *News*, "will imply safety during sexual activity and safety in the taxi." This conjunction of events was vividly illustrated in the Brian De Palma movie *Dressed to Kill*, in which Angie Dickinson, emerging from a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, makes love or something with a total stranger in the backseat of a taxi. (They were not wearing seat belts.)



AFTERWARDS, ANGIE DISCOVERS that the man has a venereal disease, but, luckily for her, she is stabbed to death moments later in an elevator by Michael Caine, who is wearing a blond wig. Perhaps Dr. Ruth was thinking of that film when she made the connection between safe sex and a safe taxi ride. The difference between the two, of course, is that there is such a thing as safe sex.

UNLIKE THE OTHERS, JUDD HIRSCH is not a surprise choice for these recordings. At least he starred in the television sitcom "Taxi," in which Andy Kaufman, as Latka Gravas, set the standard for verbal unintelligibility that is met by drivers today. But, when Hirsch records his message, he would be wise to avoid the overly emotional Jewish old-man archetype he effected in *Independence Day*. Nobody wants to hear some alter cocker screaming, "For God's sake, take your belongings! You think money grows on trees? See you in shul!"

THE RATIONALE FOR INNOVATIONS like the mayor's new program has always seemed shaky to me. Why should the value of something be certified by a celebrity's say-so? Some years ago I noticed an advertisement for a new hotel in Seoul, Korea, which was being recommended by Princess Lee Radziwill. She said, "See you in Seoul." I wondered why I should choose a hotel on the basis of the princess's recommendation, or why the Mr. Coffee machine was to be considered a superior device because Joe DiMaggio insisted it was.

THE PRACTICE CONTINUES TODAY. Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Palmer urges people to overextend themselves by borrowing from The Money Store, and perpetual-Emmy-Award-losing-soap-opera-star Susan Lucci insists we buy a Ford. Corporations must think that people accord special trustworthiness to celebrities. "Hi, I'm George Plimpton for Stayfree Maxipads. See you on the tennis court!"

IN THE NEW TAXI PROgram, the persuasiveness of celebrity voices is particularly misgauged because no one is more fascinating to a passenger than the drivers themselves. That habit of incessantly chatting over the static-ridden walkie-talkie. What are they telling one another? Jokes? "Did you hear the one about the hc;yp and the nnttgko?" Maybe there is a central communicant somewhere who, like 1010 WINS, gives continuous news reports from the home planet, or a malevolent Big Brother who is ordering the drivers to swerve onto the sidewalk and tailgate a baby stroller; or a benevolent one, an instructor who is there to answer the drivers' recurrent questions: "What means brake?"

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PASsenger and taxi driver is like none other in society. For all the normal reasons, the passenger wishes to separate himself as far as possible from the driver's behavior, yet his proximity in the yellow vehicle invariably makes him the driver's accomplice. "That fooking LL4eepw," observes the driver of another cabbie whom he has just caused to plow through the window of a grocery store. "Yeah," one answers feebly, allying himself with someone of whom he feels more like a captive, and on whom, in any other situation, he would quickly call the police. In her recording, Joan Rivers asks her habitual question: "Can we talk?" No driver would presume to ask that because he knows that we can't.

IF IT WERE UP TO ME, I'D CHUCK the celebrities and have the recordings made by the drivers themselves: "Hi, this is Cz2@yp&kn Au(1/2)jjf, asking you to L4f your UU. See you in the hospital!"

ROGER ROSENBLATT

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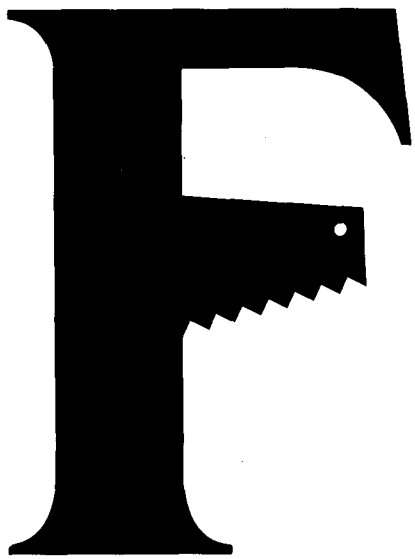

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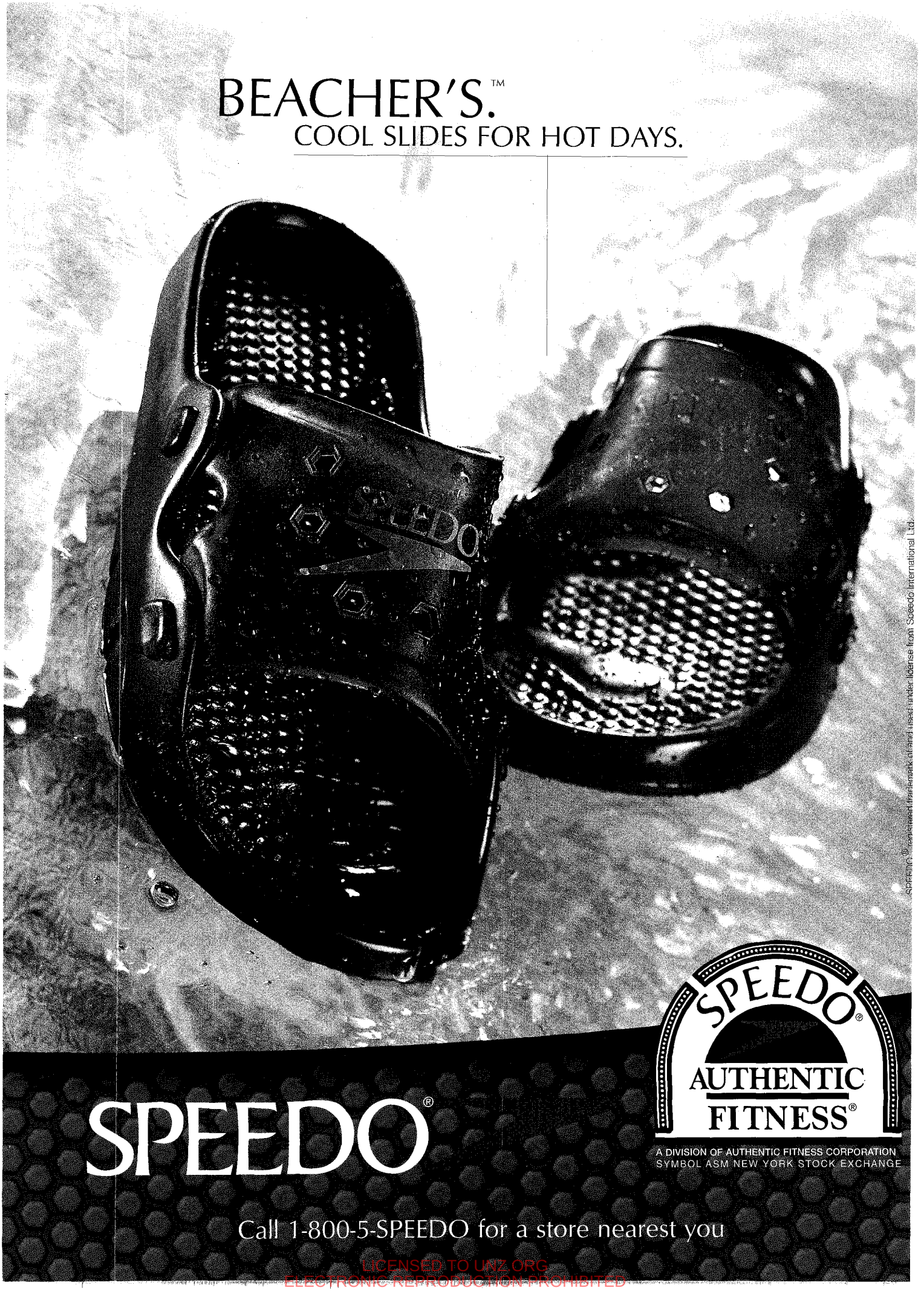
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